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THE  
Standard Manual

FOR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS.

BY  
✓  
F. M. GREEN,

*Sunday School Secretary of the General Christian Missionary Convention.*

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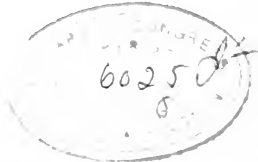
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"Thought, too, delivered, is the more possessed ;  
Teaching, we learn, and giving, we receive."

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CINCINNATI:  
CHASE & HALL, PUBLISHERS,  
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P R E F A C E .

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I SHALL not attempt, in these prefatory sentences, to record in detail the many reasons which have urged me on to the completion of this book.

It is the result of an earnest and conscientious purpose and study to materially benefit those for whom it is specially prepared. I ask for it a candid examination and a judgment upon its merits.

Its scope and purpose can best be learned by an examination of the **TABLE OF CONTENTS**, and a careful study of the book.

**PART I.** is intended not only for Sunday-school workers, but for all learners in the school of Christ, youthful or aged.

**PART II.** is for those who need and desire special information in regard to the place and purpose, organization and management, and methods of the Sunday-school, etc.

It is a difficult task to give direct credit to persons, books, tracts, and papers from whence much that is found in these pages is derived. I intend to give "honor to whom honor is due." I therefore ask each one to consider himself as meant, and accept my thanks for anything which he can claim as his own which has been reproduced on these pages.

To President B. A. Hinsdale, Isaac Errett, Robert Moffett, and Ira J. Chase, I am greatly indebted for the chapters on **CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES**, **THE PROPER DIVISION OF THE WORD**, **THE BIBLE DISPENSATIONS**, and **THE JEWISH TABERNACLE**.

I now offer and dedicate this little volume to the kind friends who have helped me with no unwilling hand in its preparation, and to the multitude of my fellow-workers in the various fields of Sunday-school activity, who have honored me in many ways and at many times with their confidence and esteem.

I send the book out upon its mission, trusting that it will lead

no one into harmful ways, and that its influence will be good, and only good.

And if a single soul shall be freighted with a "burden of desire" to stand "approved unto God" in what belongs to Christian life and labor by its study, and by acting upon its suggestions, I shall have a rich reward.

THE AUTHOR.

CINCINNATI, O., *April*, 1873.

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### NOTE.

IN the preparation of this work, the following books, etc., have been consulted, and free, but considerate, use made of them: viz., ON CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES—History of the Transmission of Ancient Books to Modern Times, by Isaac Taylor; A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament, by B. F. Westcott; The Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels, by Andrew Norton; When were our Gospels written? And Origin of the Four Gospels, by Constantine Tischendorf; The Genuineness and Authenticity of the Gospels, by B. A. Hinsdale.

ON INTERPRETATION, BIBLE HISTORY and CHRONOLOGY, BIBLE GEOGRAPHY, BIBLE MANNERS and CUSTOMS, and MISCELLANEOUS—Elementary Principles of Interpretation, by J. A. Ernesti, Stuart's Translation; Adam's Synchronological Chart of History; Hurst's Outline of Bible History; Preparing to Teach; Normal Class Manual; Kitto's History of the Bible; Magazine Normal Class Series; Smith's Dictionary of the Bible; Scripture Manners and Customs; The Sunday School Idea, Hart; Church School and its Officers, J. H. Vincent; Review Exercises in the Sunday School, H. C. Trumbull; The Blackboard in the Sunday School, Frank Beard; The Sabbath School Index, Pardee; Art of Questioning, Fitch; The Sunday School Times and the Sunday School World.

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# THE STANDARD MANUAL.

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## PART I

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### CHAPTER I.—CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

I. INTRODUCTION.—The Christian Religion is the religion of the New Testament. Hence, an examination of its foundations is an inquiry into the claims and authority of that book. Such an inquiry I am about to make. The space at my disposal restricts me to an outline, but I shall try to make it an outline in which some main lines of proof will be not only clearly but boldly drawn.

The New Testament contains a variety of elements, that may be thus classified :

1. The strictly ethical or moral teachings, as the prohibition of licentiousness and the command to honesty. These teachings carry with them their own proof and sanction.

2. The dogmatic teachings, as Christ's divinity and atonement. These teachings do not, like the others, carry their own proof and sanction, but rest on the character and authority of their authors.

3. The positive or ceremonial commands, as baptism and other similar ordinances. These, like the last, rest on a basis of authority.

4. The facts: as the miracles, the death and resurrection of Christ. These facts, of course, rest on historical evidence.

It is from the facts pertaining to the Author and first preachers of Christianity that we learn their character and authority. The great supernatural facts in the history of Christ, for example, are his credentials. "Believe me for the very works' sake,"\* he said on more than one occasion. The dogmatic and positive elements in the New Testament rest on the historical elements. Hence the importance of an inquiry into the evidence on which those facts rest. It is not too much to say, an examination of Christianity is, first of all, an inquiry into the claims of that book to historical authenticity.

II. HISTORICAL AUTHENTICITY.—The NEW TESTAMENT consists of twenty seven separate writings. These writings are commonly ascribed to eight writers: one to Matthew, one to Mark, two to Luke, five to John, fourteen to Paul, two to Peter, one to James, and one to Jude. Christians hold (1) that there were such persons as these; (2) that they lived in the times when the things recorded in the writings took place; (3) that they had, generally, a first-hand knowledge of these facts, and wrote them down in the book ascribed to them and called by their names; (4) that they told the truth when they wrote them. On what grounds do Christians hold these propositions?

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\* John xiv. 11.

To-day these twenty-seven writings are in men's hands. Christians esteem them the sacred books of their religion. They are more read, studied and discussed than any other writings in the world; and, directly or indirectly, create much of the mental activity about us. Where did Christians and others now living—that is, the present generation—get them? All answer, “From the last generation.” Sometimes it is said these writings are forgeries, but no one places the forgery in this age. Sometimes, that they are so corrupted as to have lost their identity, but no one lays the charge at the door of men now living. They were in the world thirty or fifty years ago, and were held in their present estimation. Old men now living say they were. Particular copies now existing were existing then. The literature of that age attests the same fact. Nor did that generation forge or corrupt these writings. It received them from the one just before. So they were in existence sixty or one hundred years ago, and were held in the same estimation that they are now. And so we can go back, generation by generation, for fifteen hundred years; for all that time there is not a generation of men that did not have them, and that did not account for their having them as we account for our having them to-day. Each age hands them on to the next with the certificate, “We received these books from our fathers.” The older members of the community always deliver an oral testimony; this testimony is confirmed by the old books in public or private hands; and this, again, by the evidence of literature.

III. LITERARY EVIDENCE.—Literary evidence to the existence of literary documents in former times is of

several kinds and is thus classified by Isaac Taylor:

1. "Literal quotations, whether the author cited is named or not. Such quotations \* \* prove the existence of the work quoted in the time of the writer who makes the reference."

2. "Incidental allusions are often met with, either to the words or to the sense of an author, sufficiently obvious to prove that the one writer was known to the other."

3. "Nearly every one of the principal authors of antiquity has been explicitly mentioned, or criticised, or described, by later writers. Lists of their works have been given with summaries of their contents; or they have been made the subject of connected commentaries."

4. "A copious fund of quotations is contained in some ancient treatises on particular subjects, in which all the authors who have handled the same topic are mentioned in the order of time."

5. "Controversies, whether literary, political or religious, have usually occasioned extensive quotations to be made from works of all classes, and \* \* \* many obscure facts have been adduced, which \* \* \* have served to determine questions of literary history."

6. "Among all the means for ascertaining the antiquity and genuineness of ancient books, none are more satisfactory or more complete than those afforded by the existence of early translations."\*

Isaac Taylor further says, very justly: "The validity of this kind of proof rises from its *amount*, from its *multifariousness*, and from its *incidental character*." Proofs of all these kinds, great in amount, and multiform and

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\* Pages 31-4.



incidental in character, are in our possession, showing that the Christian Scriptures have been in existence, and have been regarded as the originals of Christianity, for fifteen hundred years.

By inserting the limitation, "fifteen hundred years," in this section and the last, I must not be understood as implying that these writings were not in existence before that time. No one denies my proposition within these limits. But as fifteen hundred years take us back to the border, or near the border, of disputed ground, we must no longer pass over centuries by a leap, but go on more slowly. I proceed now to show that these writings were in existence, and were esteemed by Christians as they still are, back to the very century in which Christ lived.

IV. TESTIMONY OF EUSEBIUS.—Eusebius, the Father of Church History, was born about the year 260. His home was Palestine, and from 312, to his death in 340, he was Bishop of Cæsarea. He was a gifted and learned man. He witnessed the last great persecution of the Christians, seeing, he says, "the Sacred Scriptures of Inspiration committed to the flames in the midst of the markets." He was a voluminous writer, but I need mention here only his "*Ecclesiastical History*"—the first attempt to compose a general history of the Church. His abilities and learning, his great position and long life, gave him the best of opportunities to find out what books his fellow-Christians regarded as the sacred books of inspiration of the New Testament. The following account is gathered from the "*History*."

Book III. chapter 25, Eusebius divides the books that laid claim to Apostolical authority into three classes—

the 'Acknowledged,' the "Disputed," and the "Heretical." Under the first head, he mentions "the holy quaternion of the Gospels," the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of Paul, "the first Epistle of John as also the first of Peter;" 'and after these, if proper, the Revelation of John.' "These, then," he says, "are acknowledged as genuine." "Among the 'disputed' books, although," he says, "they are well known and approved by many" he names James, Jude, II. Peter, II. and III. John, "whether they [the Johns] are of the evangelist or of some other of the same name." The foregoing are the books enumerated as "disputed" that are also said to be "well-known and approved by many." [Westcott translates, "well-known and recognized by most."] A second division of "disputed" books Eusebius marks as "spurious," and under this sub-head mentions several writings that are not now known, save to the learned. Here again he mentions the Revelation of John, 'which some, as before said, reject, but others rank among the genuine.' Under the third head he mentions several books circulated by the heretics under the names of the Apostles.

Earlier in his great work, Eusebius says the Gospels are called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.\* He also says, "the Epistles of Paul are fourteen." They are "well-known and beyond doubt," except the Epistle to the Hebrews, which "some set aside," as "not being one of Paul's Epistles."† He nowhere gives a list of Paul's Epistles; but that they are the fourteen in our possession can not be doubted, since his writings contain quotations from them, and other writers, both immediately before

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\* Book II. 15; III. 24. † Book III. 3.

and after, do give their names. Thus far he expresses the views current in the Church. There are (1) "the true, genuine, well-authenticated writings;" (2) "those others, which are not only not embodied in the canon, but are likewise disputed, notwithstanding that they are recognized by most ecclesiastical writers;" and (3) the heretical books, "of which no one of those writers in the ecclesiastical succession has condescended to make any mention in his works." It is clear, therefore, that the Father of Church History received, along with all his brethren, the four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen Pauline Epistles, and one Epistle each of both Peter and John. Were this all, he would be leaving in doubt James, Jude, II. Peter, II. and III. John, and Revelation. Still, his testimony is conclusive that all of these but the last were generally received—"they are recognized by most ecclesiastical writers." What is more, there can be little doubt, if any, that when he designated certain of the "disputed" books as "spurious" he intended to give the others the sanction of his own judgment. It is also clear that he acknowledged the apostolicity of the Hebrews, for he both mentions it without objection in his summary, and quotes from it freely in his writings. He speaks of James and Jude as belonging to "the seven Epistles called Catholic," and adds: "We know that these [the two] have been publicly used with the rest [of the seven] in most churches." He was in doubt whether Revelation was the work of John the Apostle, and therefore hesitated whether to put it among the "acknowledged" books or the "spurious." It will be seen that in the time of Eusebius the New Testament writings were grouped

as they are now—"four Gospels," "fourteen Epistles of Paul," and "seven Catholic Epistles," besides the Acts, and the Revelation, each a book of its own kind, and therefore incapable of classification.

Such is the testimony of Eusebius—certainly the most competent man of the time to express the voice of the universal Church. He spoke both as a historian and a critic. His "History" ends with 324, but his active Church-life covers the half-century from 340 to 290. His testimony belongs as much to his earlier as to his later years. He spoke for the past as well as the present; spoke not only what he had seen in the Church in his own day, but also what he had learned in youth from the old men of the Church and from his life-long study of Christian antiquity. Eusebius and his contemporaries had a complete New Testament. "That it rested on no authoritative decision," says Westcott, "is simply a proof that none was needed."\*

V. TESTIMONY OF ORIGEN.—Origen was born at Alexandria in 185, and died at Tyre in 253. His checkered life was spent in several countries, but his great name is principally associated with the city of his birth. No Christian teacher of his time, or indeed before the Council of Nice in 325, equaled him in talents, in genius, or in learning. No other had so extensive or so profound a knowledge of the Scriptures. His mind was unstable, and his views of Scripture sometimes visionary; but no one questions the integrity of his character or the purity of his life. He was one of the most voluminous of writers. Jerome said he wrote more than other men

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\* Page 393.

read, and Epiphanius that he was the author of six thousand writings. His ability and learning, the number of his works, as well as his position in the great Greek capital, make him the best witness to the Scriptures found in that age. Time has dealt hardly with his works, and we must accept much of his testimony at second-hand. He, like Eusebius, professed to repeat only what he had received from his Christian predecessors—"preserving the rule of the Church."

"In the first book of his Commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew," says Eusebius, "following the Ecclesiastical Canon, he attests that he knows only of four Gospels, as follows: 'As I have understood from tradition, respecting the four Gospels, which are the only undisputed ones in the whole Church of God throughout the world. The first is written according to Matthew \* \* once a publican, afterward an Apostle; \* \* the second is according to Mark; \* \* the third according to Luke; \* \* and, last of all, the Gospel according to John.' " In the fifth book of his Commentaries on John, according to Eusebius, Origen says: "Paul did not even write to all the churches to which he preached." Also, Peter "has left one Epistle undisputed. There may be also a second, but on this there is some doubt." In the same passage quoted by Eusebius, Origen says: "John wrote the Apocalypse. \* \* He has also left an Epistle consisting of very few lines. It may be, also, a second is from him, but not all agree that they are genuine; but both together do not contain a hundred lines." In the same extract he discusses the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and concludes "that the thoughts are the

Apostle's [Paul's], but the diction and phraseology belong to some one who has recorded what the Apostle said, and as one who noted down at his leisure what his master dictated. If, then, any Church considers this Epistle as coming from Paul, let it be commended for this, for neither did those ancient men deliver it without cause"\*

In a version of Origen's Homilies, or popular preachings, on Genesis and Joshua, preserved by Rufinus—a version not of the highest authority, but that, so far as it bears on this question, is only an amplification of the evidence already introduced—Origen spiritualizes the narrative of the wells, given in Genesis xxvi. 18, *et seq.* He says the antitype of Isaac sought to lay open those wells, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, closed up by the Jews. When the Philistines strove with him, "He dug new wells, and so did his servants. Isaac's servants were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; his servants are Peter, James, and Jude; his servant also is the Apostle Paul; who all dug wells of the New Testament." He also spiritualizes the narrative of the fall of Jericho given in Joshua, thus:

"So, too, our Lord, whose advent was typified by the son of Nun, when he came sent his Apostles as priests bearing well-wrought trumpets. Matthew first sounded the priestly trumpet in his Gospel. Mark also; Luke and John each gave forth a strain on their priestly trumpets. Peter, moreover, sounds loudly on the twofold trumpet of his Epistles; and so also James and Jude. Still the number is incomplete, and John gives forth the trumpet-sound in his Epistles and Apocalypse; and Luke, while

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\* See Eusebius, Book VI. chap. 25.

describing the Acts of the Apostles. Lastly, however, came he who said: '*I think that God hath set forth us Apostles last of all;*' and thundering on the fourteen trumpets of his Epistles threw down even to the ground the walls of Jericho; that is to say, all the instruments of idolatry and the doctrines of philosophers."\*

Origen's fanciful views of Scripture do not in the least subtract from the value of his testimony as to *what is Scripture*. His writings are colored through and through with both the spirit and the language of the New Testament. His lists of books and of writers are constantly supported by quotations made from nearly all the books in our New Testament. With the exception of translations, Eusebius and Origen each furnishes abundant examples of all the kinds of evidence enumerated by Isaac Taylor.

VI. TESTIMONY OF THREE EARLIER ECCLESIASTICAL WRITERS.—Going back one generation farther, we meet three great ecclesiastical writers—Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, and Irenæus of Lyons. These all flourished between the year 160 and the year 220 or 240 (the date of Tertullian's death being in dispute). They were the foremost men in the Church in their respective countries, Egypt, the Province of Africa, and Gaul. Not only so, in point of ability and learning they ranked with the first men of their time. They are unexceptional witnesses in every respect.

Clement speaks of the "four Gospels which have been handed down to us."† Eusebius has preserved a frag-

\* These passages are quoted from Westcott, Pages 329, 30.

† *Miscellanies*, Book III. chap. 13.

ment of a lost work of Clement's, in which that father "gives the traditions respecting the order of the Gospels, as derived from the oldest presbyters," saying, "those which contain the genealogies [Matthew and Luke] were written first." He then mentions Mark and John by name. Eusebius further says Clement, in the same work, 'has given us abridged accounts of all the canonical [acknowledged] Scriptures, not even omitting those that are disputed. I mean the book of Jude and the other general [or Catholic] Epistles. \* \* \* The Epistle to the Hebrews he asserts was written by Paul '\*"

In a number of places Tertullian speaks of the Gospels by name, and vindicates their authority. He says they have Apostles and Apostolic men for their authors. "Of the Apostles, therefore, John and Matthew first instill faith into us, whilst of Apostolic men Luke and Mark renew it afterward."† The following passage shows how he grounded the sacred books on the authority of antiquity:

"On the whole, then, if that is evidently more true which is earlier, if that is earlier which is from the very beginning, if that is from the beginning which has the Apostles for its authors, then it will certainly be quite as evident that that comes down from the Apostles which has been kept as a sacred deposit in the churches of the Apostles. Let us see what milk the Corinthians drank from Paul; to what rule [of faith] the Galatians were brought for correction; what the Philippians, the Thessalonians, the

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\* The fragment is found in "The Ecclesiastical History," Book VI. chap. 13.

† Against Marcion, Book IV. chap. 2.



Ephesians read [out of it]; what utterance also the Romans give, so very near [to the Apostles] to whom Peter and Paul conjointly bequeathed the Gospel, even sealed with their own blood."\*

He names other books, and quotes from them, as we shall soon see. Tertullian was the first to call the Christian Scriptures the "New Testament"—a name which shows that a canon was already formed and generally accepted.

Irenæus, also, mentions the Gospels by name, says they are four in number, and constructs a curious argument to show there can be but four. He also names other books, and quotes from them, as well as from some he does not name. His testimony is all the more valuable from the fact that in youth he had been a pupil of Polycarp of Smyrna, who had been taught by the Apostle John.

I am not aware that any one of these three writers attempts to give a full list of the New Testament writings. Still, they recognize nearly every book found in our list, either by expressly mentioning it, or by unequivocal quotation. No one, in fact, can fully appreciate the force of their testimony, who has not read some part of their writings. Even if they never named a book, their writings would be impressive witnesses both to Christianity and to the New Testament. Their great themes are New Testament themes; their spirit is distinctly Christian; and their writings, like those of Origen, are colored through and through with New Testament language. No man who reads Clement, Tertullian, and Irenæus can more

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\* Against Marcion, Book IV. chap. 5.

doubt that they were acquainted with the New Testament than a man who reads the speeches of Daniel Webster can doubt that he was familiar with such documents as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Some statistics will make the argument from quotations still more forcible. They will be gathered from the "Indexes of Scripture," appended to the "Ante-Nicene Christian Library" translations of the Fathers.

Clement makes quotations or allusions to the Gospels, Acts, Romans, I. and II. Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I. and II. Thessalonians, I. and II. Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, I. Peter, I. John, Jude, Revelation. His quotations and allusions are nearly one thousand in number. So accurate is Clement that his quotations are of great value for the closest critical purposes. In his "Against Marcion," Tertullian quotes from nineteen of the books of our New Testament, sometimes naming them. They are the four Gospels, Acts, Romans, I. and II. Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I. and II. Thessalonians, I. Timothy, I. Peter, I. John, and Revelation. In this single work his quotations and allusions are more than seven hundred in number—some of them slight, others including several verses. He makes two hundred and seventy-five from John's Gospel alone. In "Against Heresies" and in the fragments of his lost writings, Irenæus recognizes in the same way twenty-five books, viz: the four Gospels, Acts, Romans, I. and II. Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, I. and II. Thessalonians, I. and II. Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, I. and II. Peter,

I. and II. John, and Jude. His quotations and allusions are even more numerous than Tertullian's.

We have now made out a chain of unimpeachable testimony one and a half centuries in length. Many other witnesses belonging to the same period could be called. Nor has the testimony given by those summoned been exhausted; but that adduced is more than enough to show that the New Testament was in existence from 325 back to 175, and also to show the estimation in which it was held. What is more, if every word of proof now brought forward were blotted out, enough would still remain to carry conviction on these points to every candid mind.

VII. ANCIENT CANONS AND VERSIONS.—The *Murator Canon* is an ancient manuscript, composed in or near Rome about the year 160. It speaks the voice of the Western Church. Unfortunately, the first page or pages have been lost. It calls Luke and John the third and fourth Gospels; and there can be no reasonable doubt that the lost portion called Matthew and Mark the first and second. Following the Gospels in the present order are the Acts, all of the Pauline Epistles but Hebrews, II. and III. John, Jude, and Revelation.

The old Syrian translation, called *The Peshito*, was made, according to some authorities in the second half of the second century; according to others, in its first half. This venerable version, which Tischendorf says "takes us to the neighborhood of the Euphrates," is still extant. It speaks the voice of the Oriental Church. It contains the four Gospels, the Acts, all of the Pauline Epistles, James, I. Peter, and I. John.

The *Old Latin* version, made in North Africa in the middle of the same century, no longer exists in its original form; but it is the basis of the *Vulgate*, and abundant fragments of it are scattered throughout ancient Latin ecclesiastical literature. Canon Westcott has thoroughly studied "the Canon of the old Latin version," and reached the conclusion that it exactly coincided with the *Muratorii* list.

The same writer thus sums up the testimony of these ancient versions: "Their voice is one to which we can not refuse to listen. They give the testimony of Churches, and not of individuals. They are sanctioned by public use, and not only supported by private criticisms. Combined with the original Greek, they represent the New Testament Scriptures as they were read throughout the whole of Christendom toward the close of the second century. Even to the present day they have maintained their place in the services of a vast majority of Christians; though the languages in which they were written only live now so far as they have supplied the materials for the construction of later dialects. They furnish a proof of the authority of the books which they contain, widespread, continuous, reaching to the utmost verge of our historic records. Their real weight is even greater than this; for when history first speaks of them it speaks as of that which was recognized as an heritage from an earlier period, which can not have been long after the days of the Apostles."\*

VIII. JUSTIN MARTYR'S TESTIMONY.—Justin, both philosopher and martyr, was born in Palestine near

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\* Page 243.

the close of the first century. He suffered martyrdom at Rome in 167. He was a man of ability, learning, and character—the foremost of the writers called Apologists—and his testimony to the currency in his time of the great New Testament facts and doctrines is abundant and unmistakable. His testimony to the New Testament writings is not so clear and strong, but for an obvious reason. He was separated only by a single generation from the Apostles, and the stream of oral teaching was still full and strong, while books had not assumed the importance that they were soon to attain. Still Justin is not silent in regard to books. He speaks repeatedly of the “Memoirs of the Apostles.” “For the Apostles, in the Memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them,” etc. “And on the day called Sunday all [Christians] who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the Memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read as long as time permits” \* These were the Gospels of Justin and his fellow-Christians. Their names he nowhere gives, but his frequent quotations show that they were our well-known Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Besides the Memoirs, he names only Revelation. Canon Westcott points out Justin’s quotations from other books, or allusions to them, and concludes thus: “It will be found that the Catholic Epistles and the Epistles to Titus and Philemon alone of the writings of the New Testament have left no impression on the genuine or doubtful works of Justin Martyr.” †

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\* First Apology of Justin, chaps. 66, 7.      † Page 153.

IX. TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.—We reach, finally, the group of writers coming immediately after the Apostles, called the Apostolic Fathers. They are Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, and, in a broad sense, Papias, and the unknown writer of the "Epistle to Diognetus." They cover the period from the year 70 to 120. The chain of evidence passes from the Apologists (from 170 to 120), and notably from Justin, to them; and, if we can follow it through their writings, we shall have bound ourselves fast to the Apostles and to Christ.

First, it should be remarked that books are even less prominent now than they were in the time of Justin. The nearer we come to the living Apostle or Christ, the more we depend on the spoken and the less on the written word. Hence, these Fathers do not testify so much to books as to facts and doctrines. Canon Westcott truly says: "They witness that the great outlines of the life and teaching of our Lord were familiarly known to all from the first; they prove that Christianity rests truly on an historic basis."\* Accordingly, if we could not find trace of a single book in this period, Christianity would not be invalidated; for Christ's religion was first preached, afterward written. But we do find plain trace of books. Polycarp quotes from Matthew, and alludes to I. John. Ignatius quotes from the first Gospel, and alludes to the fourth. The writing called "Barnabas" quotes from Matthew, and shows an acquaintance with John. Whoever wrote "Diognetus" was also acquainted with the fourth

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\* Page 49.

Gospel. Papias mentions both Matthew and Mark \* Clement appeals to I. Corinthians by name, as Ignatius does to the Ephesians, and Polycarp to the Philippians. "With the exception of the Epistles of Jude, II. Peter, II and III. John, with which no coincidences occur, and I. and II. Thessalonians, Colossians, Titus, and Philemon, with which the coincidences are very questionable, all the other Epistles were clearly known and widely used."†

X. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION.—I have sought to trace all the books, or so many of them as possible, through each period. The reader can now readily do what want of space prevents the writer's doing, take up each book separately and follow it through the whole time covered by the argument, bringing into one line all the writers named that bear testimony to it in any way, by naming it, by quotation, or allusion, thus:

MATTHEW—Eusebius, Origen, Clement, Tertullian, and Irenæus; the Syriac and Old Latin Versions; Justin Martyr; and the Apostolic Fathers (either collectively or individually).

It will be worth while here to group the witnesses to those books that Eusebius does not rank among the "acknowledged;" though saying of them "they are well-known and approved by most."

HEBREWS.—(some of the writers do not attempt to determine the authorship, though admitting the book as Scripture) Eusebius, Origen, Clement, Tertullian, Irenæus, *Peshito Version*, and Clement of Alexandria.

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\* Eusebius, "Ecclesiastical History," Book III. 39.

† Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Article on "Canon."

**JAMES.**—Eusebius, Origen, Irenæus, *Peshito Version*, Clement of Rome.

**II. PETER.**—Eusebius, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria No other New Testament book rests on such slender evidence. Yet it is said “passages from Clement of Rome, Hermas, Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, and Irenæus, suggest an acquaintance with this Epistle. To these may be added a probable reference in the Martyrdom of Ignatius and another in the Apology of Milito.”\*

**II. and III. JOHN**—Eusebius, Origen, the *Murator* *Canon*, Clement, and Irenæus.

**JUDE.**—Eusebius, Origen, Clement, Tertullian, *Murator* *Canon*.

**REVELATION.**—Origen, Clement, Tertullian, *Murator* *Canon*, and Justin Martyr.

In this statement I have mentioned no writer (save in the case of II. Peter) not previously introduced. The argument could be much strengthened in some cases, if that were necessary, by the introduction of witnesses that the plan of this chapter compels me to exclude. But the reader who may be left in doubt, in any case, is referred to treatises on the Canon, to Dictionary and Cyclopædia Articles, and to Dissertations in “Introductions” and Commentaries.

It may be said, if the twenty-seven books were all received by the Church from the beginning, there would be unmistakable traces of each at any and all times from the close of the Apostolic age onward. This is palpably absurd. In the first place, the earlier Christian literature is very small in quantity. It was not, in the Church, a

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\* Smith's Dictionary, Art. “II. Peter.”



literary period; nor has time dealt kindly with such as was produced. In the second place, the earliest writings—the Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers—were not controversial or apologetical; but they were written for counsel, warning, and encouragement. It does not come in their way to give lists of books, nor freely to quote texts. For the latter, as we have seen, they were too near the oral Gospel. But when we reach the Age of the Apologists, or defenders of the faith against external assaults, still more of the controversialists, when the Church was racked by dissension, the books of the New Testament stand out in unmistakable prominence. And it may not be amiss to remark, while a writer's mention of a book or his quotation from it proves its existence in his time, his failure to name it or quote it does not prove its non-existence.

XI. THE CANON SETTLED.—The Canon was substantially settled before the close of the second century. Origen, therefore, speaks of the “Canonical Books” early in the third. Some may think it strange that the Canon was not settled earlier than it was, but no one is likely to hold that opinion who is familiar with all the facts bearing on the case. The more important of them are these: The New Testament is made up of twenty-seven separate writings; these were scattered by their authors over a considerable share of the Roman Empire; in no case were more than two or three sent to the same place; some were sent to Churches, some to particular districts, some to especial classes, some to single individuals; the collecting, comparing, and verifying of all these books in that time of slow communication and of tardy multipli-

cation of books, when the relations of distant communities of Christians were broken up or never formed, owing to persecution, was necessarily a work of time. It is noteworthy, too, though perfectly natural, that, as a rule, those books were latest in receiving the approval of the whole Church, that were shortest, or were sent originally to the obscurest persons or places. On the completion of the Canon, Tertullian gave the collection its name *NOVUM TESTAMENTUM*, *THE NEW TESTAMENT*.

It is constantly asserted, and very commonly believed, that the early Councils played a very important part in settling the Canon. The work was substantially done before the first Council sat, by the concurrent voice of the Church. It is sometimes said that there was no New Testament before the fourth century; that it was made at the Council of Nice in 325. How ignorant or dishonest those are who make these charges, the facts presented in this chapter show. At Nice the Scriptures were appealed to in controversy; but the question, *What is Scripture?*—the question of the Canon—was not before the Council in any form. It is sometimes said, too, that very little attention was paid to the claims of the books; that they were voted up or down in a most arbitrary manner, small majorities often deciding what *was* and what *was not* Scripture; and that the books admitted into the Canon had no better claims than many that were rejected. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Passing by the Council of Laodicea, the genuineness of whose reputed work on this subject is greatly disputed, the third of Carthage, A. D. 397, was the first that considered the Canon. As there were still some lingering doubts touching one or

two books, this Council very properly gave its opinion. This opinion is entitled to such consideration as properly belongs to the mature judgment of a body of men who had a full knowledge of the subject they were dealing with, and who were intent on maintaining the sacredness of the Scriptures. Later Councils reaffirmed the Canon, not so much for controversial as for declaratory purposes, just as at a still later day the Catalogue of Sacred Books was put in the Creeds. Nor is there in early literature any traces of violent and heated controversies touching this question. Heretics disputed certain books, and the Catholic Christians maintained them; some sections of the Christian world temporarily held to certain books that other sections repudiated; but, on the whole, the Canon was settled with singular unanimity. This settlement was progressive, but it was made under circumstances that entitle it to be received as a part of the evidence.

It has been remarked that from 325 to 175 only a single line of evidence has been followed. In the age of Eusebius, we are not dependent upon Eusebius; nor in the age of Origen, upon Origen. Valuable as is the testimony of both these writers, we could get along without it. Nor are we shut up to the three great writers who lived in the second half of the second century. What is more, a number of witnesses living before the middle of the second century have not been called. But, of course, the lines bounding the field of information converge as we recede in the distance. The history of Christianity is focalized, at last, in the person of Christ.

It is but the simple truth to say the historical authentication of the New Testament, compared with other

writings, is unusually complete. No other group of ancient writings, twenty-seven in number, that rest on more convincing, if so convincing, evidence, can be named. Some modern writings are even more in dispute. While the ratification of our National Constitution was pending in 1788, three of our great statesmen, Jay, Madison, and Hamilton wrote those admirable political essays known as the "Federalist;" and it is no exaggeration to say that there is more room for controversy concerning the authorship of some of these pieces than there is concerning any of the strictly historical books of the New Testament.

XII. CONCLUSION.—It is now necessary to make some remarks on one feature of the testimony adduced. It has been seen that the ancient witnesses point backward to an earlier antiquity. From the beginning, currency in the Church is the proof of Apostolicity. Tertullian, for example, says of a Gospel used by one of the heretics: "Marcion's Gospel is not known to most people, and to none whatever is it known without being at the same time condemned." To him, as to all the ancients, the seal of the inspired books is their having had "free course in the Church from the beginning." The Apostles themselves set the example. Luke deems it proper for him to write to Theophilus, because he had a perfect understanding of all things from the very first.\* John writes: "That which was from the very beginning, \* \* that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you."† The "traditions"—or things delivered—whether by word or epistle, are to be "held fast." Perhaps it is not super-

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\* Luke i. 1-4.

† 1 John i. 1-3.

fluous to say, on a community trained in such a jealous care, taught from the beginning to reject everything that did not bear the seal of antiquity, it would be peculiarly difficult to impose spurious, and especially newly invented books.

Some parts of the historical evidence of the New Testament books have now been presented. The reader must feel himself bound to the Apostolic Age, and to the Apostles themselves, by a strong bond. This evidence establishes the genuineness of the New Testament history. What is more, that history is the personal testimony of the men who wrote it. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude are not simply names written on some old manuscripts; but men of flesh and blood, who once walked the earth, accompanied with Jesus, preached the Gospel, and wrote down the story and the religion of their Master. Their writings are a personal testimony that at once take Jesus out of the land of myth, legend, or fable, and place him on the solid rock of historical reality. He is a real person, teaching the people, healing their diseases and sicknesses, seeking and saving the lost. A treatise on Christian evidences would require that I go on to examine and apply the testimony of these original witnesses. But here that is not called for. This is the introductory chapter to a SUNDAY SCHOOL MANUAL. That testimony is the very material, in great part, on which both the Sunday-school teacher and pupil will work together. The former, if wise, will not only explain the precepts and enforce the commands of the New Testament; but he will point out that it

is a personal testimony to Christ. His standpoint will be that of the Apostle John:

"Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."\*

The teacher is to teach what is in the books, but my work is done now that I have shown the historical foundations on which the books rest.

\* John xx. 30, 1.

The Superintendent can make the argument of the foregoing chapter much more effective, and, at the same time, teach the facts more quickly and thoroughly, by placing on the blackboard the following table. He can also readily construct one, on the same plan, for all the New Testament Books, breaking the line when no trace of a book is found:

Early Witnesses to the Gospel, Arranged in the Order of Time.

		Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
324-260	Eusebius.				
250-185	Origen.				
220-160	Clement. Tertullian. Irenæus.				
172-100	Muratorian. Canon. Peshito and Old Latin Versions. Justin Martyr.				
120-70	Apostolic Fathers, "Barnabas" Clement. Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, "Diognetus."				

## CHAPTER II.—INTERPRETATION.

INTERPRETATION is an act. It is the act of teaching what is the meaning of another's language; or that skill which enables us to attach to another's language the same meaning that the author himself attached to it. Any other meaning than this can never be called, with propriety, the meaning of the author. The interpretation of the books of the Bible is a high and difficult task.

It has been truly said, "That all solid knowledge and judicious defense of divine truth must originate from a right understanding and accurate interpretation of the Scriptures. The purity of the Christian religion has shone brighter or been obscured in proportion as the study of sacred interpretation has flourished or decayed."

Christian doctrine is preserved only in written records; hence the interpretation of these records is absolutely essential to a knowledge of it.

There are many difficulties in the way of successful interpretation. It requires learning, judgment, and diligence, and, frequently, more than a usual degree of understanding is requisite to manage an exegetical inquiry with success.

The Bible presents more than usual difficulties to the interpreter; such as the antiquity of its books—the peculiar dialect, the manners, customs, education and style, modes of thinking and expression, situation, government,

climate, of the authors, which in so many respects are dissimilar to ours. Interpretation may be called grammatical, when the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences is made out by usage and the context. It is called historical, when the meaning is illustrated and confirmed by historical arguments which serve to show in a clear manner that no other sense can be put upon the passage, whether the nature of the subject is regarded, or the genius, manner and circumstances of the writer.

There are two requisites of a good interpreter :

*First*, he must have a right perception of the meaning of words.

*Second*, he must be able to explain them properly.

Hence, the interpreter must demand satisfactory reasons for believing in any particular explanation, and build his opinion respecting the sense of any passage on such reasons. These reasons must be based on the usage, the context, the nature of the subject, and the design of the writer.

In order to interpret the Sacred Writings properly, there are desirable helps :

1. No one will be likely to get the true meaning of the Scriptures unless he approaches their study with the right aim and in a truth-loving spirit; such a spirit as David had, when he said: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak;" and, "With my whole heart have I sought thee;" and, "Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."

2. He must have a general and special knowledge of the word of God, its object, arrangement, and contents; and of the world and the things that are in it. This



knowledge is gained by reading, observation, and study.

It is a good thing to be acquainted with the original languages in which the Bible was written; to be thoroughly conversant with sacred geography, with Bible history, manners and customs, with the natural history of the Bible, and with Church history.

It should not be forgotten that the Scriptures are to be interpreted by the same rules as other books. While we should approach their study with the sincere and truth-loving spirit of an honest heart, yet it is nothing short of fanaticism to despise literature and general study of language, and refer everything merely to the influence of the Spirit.

It is well stated in the following words that, "If the Scriptures be a *revelation* to men, then are they to be read and understood by men. If the same laws of language are not observed in this *revelation* as are common to men, then they have no guide to the right understanding of the Scriptures; and an interpreter needs *inspiration* as much as the original writer. It follows, of course, that the Scriptures would be no revelation in themselves, nor of any use except to those who are inspired. But such a book the Scriptures are not; and nothing is more evident than that when God has spoken to men, he has spoken in the language of men—for he has spoken by men, and for men."

If every man has the right, and is bound to read the Scriptures, and to judge for himself what they teach, he must have certain rules to guide him in the exercise of this privilege and duty. These rules are not arbitrary. They are not imposed by human authority, and they have

no binding force which does not flow from their own intrinsic truth and propriety. They are few and simple.

1. The words of Scripture are to be taken in their plain and most obvious historical sense. That is, they must be taken in the sense attached to them in the age and by the people to whom they were addressed. "This only assumes that the sacred writers were honest, and meant to be understood."

An old writer says: "The Scripture can not be understood *theologically* until it is understood grammatically." Hence, the first thing is to get the true grammatical and historical meaning of words.

2. If any passage of Scripture is obscure or doubtful, explain it by what is plain and clear. This rule is not appropriate to the Scriptures only; it is adopted by all good interpreters of other writings. It is a rule which common sense prescribes, and is, therefore, well grounded. If a passage admits of different interpretations, that only can be the true one which agrees with what the Bible teaches elsewhere on the same subject. Hence, Scripture must explain Scripture.

3. Every interpretation should harmonize with the design of the writer, and with the context; hence, we should ascertain the writer's aim and outline of thought by studying sentences, paragraphs, chapters, and even whole books if necessary. The certainty of any exegesis is connected with the design of the discourse.

4. Consider the peculiarities and circumstances of the writer. This will include his character and mission; the times in which he lived; the country in which he lived, with its manners and customs; the opinions with which

he was familiar and which he opposed or defended; and the language in which he wrote.

There can be no doubt but that these rules are of the greatest importance in order to the proper understanding of the word of God. But, as has already been suggested, nothing is more necessary than an humble and teachable disposition of mind.

Few things—perhaps nothing—are more hostile to the pursuit of truth than self-conceit and pride of intellect; and there is no temper more offensive to the great Author of religious truth than a proud and self-sufficient disposition.

Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect to the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off. Every one who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. And he who would be a successful interpreter of the word of God must unite with a competent intelligence, a profound reverence and humility, in exploring the depths of heavenly wisdom.

### CHAPTER III.—THE PROPER DIVISION OF THE WORD.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”  
—II. Timothy ii. 15.

No more important rule than this can be given to a religious teacher. It is quite as important to the Sunday-school teacher as to the teacher in the pulpit; for their work, as teachers, is the same, the difference being mainly that between the mature minds addressed from the pulpit, and the immature minds dealt with in the Sunday-school.

It is a question of doubt as to the allusion of the Apostle in the language of the text—whether to the dissection of an animal offered in sacrifice, or to carving, or to plowing, or to the work of the carpenter. But, whatever the allusion, the lesson taught is clear, namely, that the word of God is to be handled skillfully, so that every portion of it shall be appropriated to its intended use—milk for babes (I. Peter ii. 2); strong meat for those of full growth (Hebrews v. 13, 14); portions for little children, young men and fathers (I. John ii. 12, 13); messages of former ages for those to whom they were addressed (Romans iii. 19); the message of the “last days,” for all subsequent times, and all peoples, nations, kindreds, and tongues (Hebrews i. 1, 2; Mark xvi. 15,

16); messages for sinners to call them to repentance and salvation (Luke xxiv. 47); and messages to Christians, to instruct them in the ways of the new life (Colossians ii. 6, 7).

The instruction to Timothy to divide the word of truth properly, implies not only that this word is made up of different portions, capable of division, but that these divisions are so related to each other as to constitute, when properly combined, one harmonious whole; and that, if the proper relations of each division to all the other divisions is disregarded, and we wrongly divide the word of truth, the truth is distorted and fails to accomplish its purpose.

That this may be appreciated, let it be noted that what we call, by way of eminence, *the Bible*, or *the Book*, is not a single production of one author, written at one time, in one language, and addressed to one people, for one object; nor is it an encyclopædia, in which the contributions of various contemporaneous authors combine to make one complete work; nor is it made up of the working authors, trained in one school, and perpetuating, from age to age, the peculiarities of doctrine taught in that school. What we call the Old Testament is made up of thirty-nine distinct books, by about thirty different authors; and the first and last of these authors were one thousand years apart. They lived in different countries, as well as in different ages, belonged to various spheres of life, were very variant in the character and degrees of their culture, and each one spoke or wrote with a special object in view.

They are books, too, of very different character. Some

of them are *historical*; some are merely *chronicles* taken from the national archives of the Jews; some are *poetical*; one (the Book of Job) is supposed to be *dramatic*; others are *didactic*; while still others—as the books of the major prophets—combine more or less of all these characteristics.

In the New Testament we have twenty-seven books, by eight different writers, and these may be classed as biographical, historical, epistolary, and prophetic. Of these twenty-seven different productions, twenty-one are epistles, written by five different authors—some of them addressed to churches, some to communities of a particular race, and some to individuals; but each with its own distinct object in view. They were probably all written within a period of sixty years.

Now, take into view these sixty six different productions of about forty different authors, covering a period of about sixteen hundred years, and—while we admit and are ready to prove that there is a golden thread of divine purpose stretching over all this period, on which all these books are strung; a unity of plan, and, hence, a unity of origin, which warrants their combination into one book as a connected divine relation—it is evident that we can not understand the *unity* of the books of the Bible if we do not understand their *divinity*; and that we can not rightly *combine* their teachings if we do not know how to *divide* rightly the word of truth.

If, now, we are asked, How shall we come into possession of the knowledge necessary to enable us to divide the word of truth rightly? we are brought to the announcement of what we regard as the first important rule

to be observed by all who would be skillful teachers of the word of truth:

*The first essential is a good general knowledge of the Bible as a whole.*

There can be no intelligent proceeding without this. He who attempts to separate into parts that of which he knows nothing in its combinations, will necessarily work blindly and ruinously. This will be seen to be especially true in this case, since all our knowledge of the proper divisions of the word of truth must be gathered from the Bible itself. As well trust one to dissect a human body, who knows nothing of its anatomy, as to trust him to divide rightly the word of truth who is ignorant of the combinations of truth in this wonderful volume. It can not be too strongly emphasized, that, as a foundation for all successful analysis of the Scriptures, there must be a general acquaintance with these Scriptures as a whole. In no one thing are Sunday-school teachers, as a class, more deficient than in this. They are constantly attempting to unfold parts of that truth of which, as a system, they are ignorant. A skillful scientist may take a single bone of an animal, and, from his general knowledge of animal structures, proceed to describe the whole organization of the animal, though he never saw it. But what can he do with a single bone who is ignorant of all anatomical laws and structures? Just as much as he can do with a single text who knows nothing of God's revelation as a whole. We therefore insist, as an essential prerequisite to success in dividing the word of truth, that the teacher shall be well grounded in a general knowledge of the Old and New Testaments.

This being gained, we shall be at no loss for landmarks to guide us into proper divisions of these broad realms of divine revelation. Take, for instance, this opening sentence in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners [rather, 'in many parts and in many ways'] spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

Here is one grand division, divinely marked. Observe, it is *the same God* who speaks in all these revelations. There is, therefore, a unity of purpose in the Old and the New. But, in *the method of communicating*, and in *the truth communicated*, and in *the channels of communication*, there are marked differences.

#### THEN.

In times past.  
In many parts, running over  
a period of 1,500 years  
In many ways, such as dreams,  
visions, oracles, etc.  
To the fathers by the  
prophets.

#### NOW.

In these last days.  
In one comprehensive revelation,  
made within a few years.  
In one glorious gospel of  
grace.  
To all the world by his Son.

This gives us the broad division which we now know as that between the Old and New Testaments.

Let us now see if there are any divisions of the word of truth in the Old Testament. We shall expect to find such, from the fact already announced, that God formerly spoke by the prophets "in many parts and in many ways." Listen:

"These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were writ-



ten in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."—Luke xxiv. 44.

There is a threefold division of the Old Testament. It was not an arbitrary division, nor yet was it made by our Lord by divine inspiration; but one which had grown into use among the Jews as the result of the study of these various books. This was the division as it was known among the Jews of that time:

1. THE LAW—including Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2. THE PROPHETS, or *Teachers*—including Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Kings (these were termed the *former prophets*; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, and Malachi (these were termed the *latter prophets*).

3. THE HAGIOGRAPHIA, or *Holy Writings*—which included the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Songs of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the two books of Chronicles.

We give the division according to the books as they are now found in our canon, though the Jews, comprehending all in twenty-two books, according to the number of letters in their alphabet, included several books under one head that are now separate.

This threefold division may be regarded as—

- (1.) Historical.
- (2.) Prophetical.
- (3.) Didactical and Devotional.

True, they overlap. The first division is not without prophecy and devotional utterances. The second is not destitute of history and song. The third has history and

prophecy as well as devotion; nor are any of the divisions destitute of didactics. But the division is based on their main features.

The first division presents the grand features in the history of our race, from the creation of that important period in the development of the redemptive purposes of Jehovah, when he chose the Jewish nation for his own and revealed himself in *law* as their Sovereign. All the subsequent revelations in the Old Testament and the New are based on this.

The second division embodies the history of the efforts to hold this people to that law—their obediences and rewards, their disobediences and punishments; the labors of the prophets to instruct, warn, rebuke, or comfort them, according as they were obedient or disobedient.

The third division comprehends the didactic wisdom and devotional sentiment—the morals and piety which were the outgrowth of the study of the law and the prophets.

It will be seen at a glance that this threefold division is significant, and that, in rightly dividing the word of truth, it needs to be observed. To put the Hagiographa in place of the Law, or the Prophets in place of either, would distort the truth and produce hopeless confusion.

There are other divisions which may be made for convenience, and for classification in study. The Old Testament contains —

*a.* History.

*b.* Biography.

*c.* Poetry.

*d.* Law.

*e.* Type.

*f.* Prophecy.

*g.* Ethical Instruction.

*h.* Religious Sentiment.

If we select any one of these for investigation, we must make a division of the word of truth, such as the investigation demands. For instance, if *history* be the selection, we may properly divide the Old Testament history into periods.

1. From the creation to the deluge.
2. From the deluge to the call of Abraham.
3. From the call of Abraham to the giving of the law.
4. From the giving of the law to the settlement in Canaan.
5. The period of the Judges.
6. From the beginning of the reign of Saul to the close of the reign of Solomon.
7. The history of the ten tribes from Jeroboam to the captivity.
8. The history of the two tribes from Rehoboam to the captivity.
9. From the captivity to the close of Old Testament history.

This should be followed by the study of some work, like that of Prideaux, on the connection between the Old and New Testament history.

But the study of the Old Testament should be in the full light of this truth—that it contains *a gradual unfolding* of the purposes of God respecting our race; and that while it is perfect *as* a gradual development of great designs, it is *not* perfect as a complete revelation. It does not contain the gospel, except in *promise* and in *type*. It tells how God dealt with sinners in former times, but it does not tell how God deals with sinners *now*. It shows how God dealt with men under *law*, but it does not show

how God deals with men under *grace*. It shows how God prepared the way for the Savior, and the salvation which the New Testament reveals, but it contains only dim and distant revelations of that Savior and that salvation. Its revelations were "in many parts and in many ways," "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," in methods suited to the childhood and youth of the race (Galatians iv. 1-7); but the final revelation of God to humanity in its manhood is made through his Son. The prophets of the olden time were stars that shone in the long night of ignorance and sin. Jesus Christ is the "Sun of Righteousness," in whose overpowering light all these lesser lights pale into nothingness.

This leads us to notice another division, fully warranted by all the facts presented in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, namely:

### THREE DISPENSATIONS,

Succeeding each other, and all necessary to the full revelation of the divine purposes. These are—

1. The *Patriarchal*, reaching from the fall of man to the giving of the law.

2. The *Jewish*, or *Mosaic*, reaching from the giving of the law to the death of the Messiah.

3. The *Christian*, or *Messianic*, reaching from the resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah to the end of the world.

The characteristics of these dispensations may be given thus:

- |                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1.) The Family. | (1.) Domestic.                |
| (2.) The State.  | OR, (2.) National.            |
| (3.) The Church. | (3.) Ecumenical or Universal. |

In the Patriarchal Dispensation religion belonged to the *family*. The father of the family was prophet, priest and king to all under his authority. Revelations were made "in many parts and in many ways."

In the Jewish Dispensation God's purposes were given in trust to the *nation*. Jehovah was its King, and under him were such prophets, priests, and kings as he chose to appoint.

In the Christian Dispensation the Church is God's grand institution. Jesus the Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King, and his subjects are gathered from all nations, kindreds and tongues.

He, therefore, can not rightly divide the word of truth who fails to keep in view these gradual developments of the purposes of Jehovah. The whole of the Old Testament must be studied *as introductory to the New*.

Before we leave this part of our subject, let us point out *the uses of the Old Testament to us*.

1. As already repeatedly intimated, it has universal value as unfolding, through four thousand years, gradually and progressively, the purpose of God to give a Savior to the world. In the New Testament we have "the full corn in the ear;" in the Old we have the planting of the seed, its germination, the appearance of the blade, its growth, and the formation of the ear.

2. It gives us the only trustworthy history of the earliest ages of the world—the creation of man, his fall, the origin of nations and races, etc.—records which, often

challenged, are, from age to age, more fully confirmed by the revelations of science and the unearthed memorials of ancient times.

3. Its revelations of God, as he gradually unfolded himself to the apprehension of mortals, are worthy of the most devout and adoring contemplation.

4. Its revelations of man—all the phases of human nature and human character—are wonderful. No such *book of human nature* is elsewhere to be found. The severe, exact truthfulness with which human lives are daguerreotyped enables us to study man in all the unfoldings of his nature, under every variety of circumstance, as he can nowhere else be studied.

5. As a storehouse of prophetic evidences, all pointing forward to the coming of the Messiah, it supplies a basis of Christian faith of untold value.

6. There are universal truths, which belong to no one age, or country, or race, but are always and everywhere the same. These belong alike to the domains of morals and religion. The Old Testament abounds in these. And, hence, "the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Romans xv. 4.

The value of the Old Testament, as expressed in the New, may be learned from such passages as these:

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39.

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."—Luke xxiv. 27.

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—II. Timothy iii. 15.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—II. Timothy iii. 16, 17.

"All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [Jewish ages] are come."—I. Corinthians x. 11.

For all these purposes we may legitimately and profitably employ the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT.

We come now to the New Testament. Right at the start, we notice one differential attribute of this collection of books. The Old Testament, in all its revelations, was based on the conception of *one God*. "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one God."—Deuteronomy vi. 4. This was the corner-stone of that system. But the New Testament concerns itself mainly with an additional revelation, which becomes the corner-stone of a new spiritual temple, namely, *that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God*. This is the *rock* on which Jesus said he would build his church.—Matthew xvi. 16–18; I. Corinthians iii. 11; Ephesians ii. 19–22; I. Peter ii. 6. This Son of God—Immanuel, God with us—is the grand center of New Testament revelations.

In Nature, God is manifest in his *works*.

In the Patriarchal Dispensation God was manifest peculiarly in his *providences*. Hence, the creed of the patriarchal age was, as Paul expresses it, in reference to Enoch,

“He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”—Hebrews xi. 5, 6.

In the Jewish Dispensation God was manifest in *words*—in *law*.

But in the Christian Dispensation God is manifest in *flesh*. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”—John i. 14. God *with* us, and God *in* us, is the culminating glory of divine revelation. “God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.”—II. Corinthians v. 19. “Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”—I. Corinthians i. 30. It is no longer God dimly shadowing forth his presence through his works, “if, haply, we may seek after him and find him;” nor God approaching us in mysterious, striking and awful providences, to give us a gleam of his presence and cheer a dark world with an occasional smile of his fatherly love; nor God proclaiming his mighty sovereignty in words of law where thunder-tones make us forget all else but his resistless might and his unapproachable holiness: it is God revealed in man—“the man Christ Jesus,” bringing him to us on the plane of our own life, where he identifies himself with us in the weaknesses and sorrows of our lot, and bears our nature, through all its weaknesses and woes, to glorious and immortal victory over sin and death, and exalts it to kingly power in the skies. Henceforth our faith to rest in a *Person*, and our highest good to be gained by following a divine-human *Leader*.

Another peculiarity which strikes us as giving dis-



inction to the New Testament is, that it is a revelation not of *law*, but of *grace*. "The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 17

Moses.

Christ.

Law.

Grace.

Type or Shadow.

Truth or Reality.

It will be seen then, that we are in another atmosphere. The stars of night have faded away. John the Baptist, the morning-star—heralding the sun—shines with a brief and waning radiance. Then comes the glorious "Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams," and the whole world soon rejoices in the Light of Life.

I. THE GOSPELS.—We have already stated that in this New Testament we have five biographies or memoirs. While each has a distinct character of its own, they all have a common object and unite in a common demonstration. We can not here take space to discuss their differential characteristics. That is a nicety of distinction which is outside of our purpose. But, in rightly dividing the word of truth, we are concerned to know their common object. This is very plainly set forth.

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."—Luke i. 1-4.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—John xx. 30, 31.

This is clear and decisive. These four memoirs have a well-defined object—to make us acquainted with Jesus of Nazareth, that we may be persuaded to trust in him as the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and find in him salvation. His incarnation, his infancy and childhood; his manhood, with its toils, its teachings, its miracles, its struggles with temptation, its tender compassions and perpetual benevolences, its meek endurance of wrong, its heroic contests with error and sin, its beautiful unfoldings of the mercy and saving-power of God; his death on the cross for our sins; his victory over death and ascension to heaven to reign at the Father's right hand until all his enemies are subdued: all this is set forth and attested as true, that sinners may learn to love and trust this Almighty Savior, and receive from him that mercy which he freely offers to all.

We do not say that nothing else is to be learned from these books. Incidentally, there is much given that is of the greatest moment to believers; but the direct object of the writers was to produce faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

II. ACTS OF APOSTLES.—The four Gospels leave the story incomplete. They relate to a period when the Jewish law was still in force—when the scribes and Pharisees still lawfully sat in Moses' seat, and taught authoritatively the lessons of that law.—Matthew xxiii. 1-3. Our Lord was "born under the law" (Galatians iv. 4), and kept the law. He established no Church while he was on earth. While he asserted his authority as a

*teacher*, in setting forth the truth concerning his coming kingdom, he asserted no authority as *King*, or as *Lawgiver*, for this could not be until the authority of Moses and the prophets had expired. Moses and Elijah, the two most honored representatives of the law and the prophets, came, it is true, and laid down their honors at his feet, and a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR YE HIM." But this was only in the presence of a few chosen witnesses, who were charged to "tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matthew xvii. 9); thus showing that the law and the prophets were not to cease, and that Jesus was not to succeed them in authority until after the resurrection.

At the death of the Messiah, when he cried, "It is finished," the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. There was an end to the veiled mysteries of that dispensation. Its priesthood, its altars, its sacrifices, ceased to have divine significance after "the Lamb of God," who taketh away the sin of the world, was offered in sacrifice. When Jesus rose from the dead, and was declared, by his resurrection, to be "the Son of God with power" (Romans i. 4), he announced the supreme authority which he was henceforth to exercise, conferred on his chosen apostles power to act in his behalf, and gave them in charge that gospel of salvation which was henceforth to be preached in all the world, to every creature.—Matthew xxviii. 18–20; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Luke xxiv. 46, 47. But, having done this, he ascended to heaven, leaving the seal of silence on their lips until they should be endued with power from on high.—Luke xxiv. 49;

Acts i. 1-5. Here these memoirs leave us. They lead us to believe in Jesus and to own him as the Christ, the Son of God, in whom alone is salvation; but the men to whom he has intrusted the great work of publishing his salvation, and opening the gates of the kingdom to such as desire to enter (Matthew xvi. 19), are bound to silence until their departing Lord shall send them word.

It is here that the Book of Acts comes in with a distinct object. It records the descent of the Holy Spirit, the endowment of the Apostles with wisdom to guide them into all truth, and power to confirm that truth with signs and wonders and mighty deeds, and their work in preaching the Gospel, making known *the* terms of salvation, turning sinners to God, and enlisting them among the followers of Jesus. It is not the object of this book so much to supply the materials of faith, as to show how those who are led to believe in Jesus may be brought into the enjoyment of pardon and into possession of all the blessings of the kingdom of heaven. *It is a book of conversions.* In rightly dividing the word of truth, this is the portion to be given to anxious souls who are asking, "What must I do to be saved?" The four Gospels reveal *the Savior*: the Book of Acts reveals *the salvation*. The narrative of conversions embraces a great variety. There are Jews and Gentiles; some of the best characters, morally and religiously speaking, and some of the worst; ignorant and enlightened; furious persecutors and friendly inquirers; rich and poor; men and women; blind unbelievers taken out of the pit of despair; believers led to repentance; believing penitents led to obedience;

and all—Jew and Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, male and female—made one in Christ Jesus.

Here, then, every sinner who desires to be saved may learn just what he must do to be saved.

But we are made to feel, at the close of this book also, that the end is not yet. We learn clearly and fully of the conversion of sinners, and their enlistment in a new service; but the record is quite meager as to their Christian life. So we come to a third division of the New Testament.

III. THE APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES.—These are addressed not to sinners, but to saints. Their object is, not to show the way of salvation, but to teach the saved how to live so as to please God. Each has its own special object, and is to be interpreted in the light of that object; but all deal with some phase or phases of Christian faith, duty or privilege—unmastering errors, teaching Christians the true basis of their confidence and hope; acquainting them with their dangers, their duties, their privileges, their hopes, and the obligations growing out of the exceeding riches of mercy in their redemption. It is not difficult to learn, from reading any of these epistles, what was the immediate object of the writer, and thus to learn to what particular wants it is to be applied.

The Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, and I. John were written mainly for the correction of false views of Christian doctrine.

The Epistles to the Corinthians were written with special regard to schismatical tendencies in that Church.

The Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,

Thessalonians, the General Epistle of James, and I. Peter, were written also to correct erroneous and evil tendencies, but mainly to instruct in Christian duties and establish believers in the faith and hope of the gospel.

The Epistles of Jude and II. Peter were written in view of great spiritual perils, to guard Christians against the dangers of apostasy, and teach them how to live securely in the midst of these perils.

The Epistles to Timothy and Titus consist of instructions to preachers and teachers, relative to their conduct and their teaching.

The Epistle to Philemon, while relating to personal and private affairs, is a model of courtesy, politeness, and brotherly intercession.

Taking these Epistles together, we have instructions concerning—

1. Personal righteousness and holiness.
2. Marriage.
3. Family relationships and duties—husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister.
4. Social life—hospitality, conduct at feasts, entertainment of strangers.
5. Church relationships and duties—old and young, rich and poor, strong and weak, rulers and ruled, teachers and taught.
6. Spiritual relations to the universe—the rank, dignity, present enjoyments and future inheritance of the children of God.
7. Civil duties—governors and governed, masters and servants.

8. Philanthropic duties—interest in humanity at large, labor for the welfare of man as man.

9. Divine warnings and encouragements.

Thus “the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

In “rightly dividing the word of truth,” the teacher will not take these instructions to Christians and apply them to sinners. Many sad and mischievous blunders are committed from inattention to this consideration. Give the children’s bread to the children, and preach to sinners the gospel that is addressed to them.

IV. THE REVELATION.—There yet remains a question of no little interest, though not immediately concerning our salvation or our duty. What shall be the fortunes of this great enterprise for the salvation of the world? Will it triumph? Will it be defeated? Will it have varying fortunes and triumph in the end? To meet this not unlawful anxiety, we have a final book of prophecy, which, though in many of its symbolical details may be hard to understand, still impresses us with one unmistakable assurance—that out of great tribulation, and after long and desperate conflict with the princes of darkness, the Church of God will rise to final victory; the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; the universe will echo with the thundering outburst of praise: “Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth;” the New Jerusalem shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be

their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain—for the former things are passed away.

### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, let us direct the teacher to two applications of this exhortation to divide rightly the word of truth.

I. It may have reference *to the interpretation of the truth itself*, so that your pupils shall be led to a correct understanding of this or that portion of the word of God.

II. It may refer to *the application of the truth to your pupils*, so that each shall receive the portion of meat suited to his wants.

I. Under the first head, let us suggest, after the broad view we have taken of the divisions of the word of truth, the following as needful inquiries concerning any portion of Scripture under consideration:

1. Where is it found—in the Old Testament or in the New? If in the Old, is it in the Law, the Prophets, or the Hagiographa? If in the New, does it belong to the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, or the Apocalypse?

2. Under what dispensation was it spoken—the Patriarchal, the Jewish, or the Christian?

3. Who is the speaker—God, or Satan, or man? a good man or a bad one?

4. To whom was it addressed—to an individual, a nation, a church? to believers or unbelievers? Jews, Pagans, or Christians?



5. What is the character of the communication—is it history, biography, prophecy, law, or gospel?

6. What was its *immediate* intention?

7. All these being answered intelligently, there remains just one more inquiry: What is there in this that can be made profitable *now*—to me, to my pupils, to the Church, to the world?

II. Under the second head, we submit the following hints:

1. Do not attempt to bring out of a passage what is not in it. Forced interpretations are sure to have their falseness discovered sooner or later.

2. Try first to get your pupils to understand what the passage was intended to teach to those for whom it was originally intended; then suggest such lessons as you think may be drawn from it for general good.

3. Understand well the spiritual standing of your scholars. If they are Christians, feed them with the children's bread; if they are unconverted, ply them with the gospel.

4. Have in view the actual needs of your class—whether it be instruction, warning, rebuke, or encouragement; and make your selections of Scripture accordingly.

5. Finally—guard against one-sided views of truth. Keep before your mind *the whole range of gospel truth*, and let no special interpretations war against the general tenor of Bible teaching.

In this way you will be “approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

## CHAPTER IV.—BIBLE HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY.

“BIBLE HISTORY,” says Dr. Lange, “differs from the general history of the kingdom of God, in that it delineates only the foundation of this kingdom by means of, and during the course of, revelation. It traces, in historical succession, the narrative contained in the Scriptures in all its essential features. In the Old Testament it shows us all the elements of the life of faith, and sets before us many a precious example of faith and patience for our imitation; while in the New Testament it exhibits the history of faith and salvation ‘made perfect,’ both in the miracles and triumphs of the Lord, and in the deeds of his Apostles.”

As a department of useful knowledge it possesses an intrinsic value and interest surpassing whatever can be claimed for any other history. It covers a long period in the age of human society, whose chronicles, in an authentic form, have been nowhere else preserved. It runs back to the eventful epoch whence the world, in its present organic state, dates its existence; and furnishes the only reliable record of the origin of man, of his primitive condition, his fall, his subsequent development, and the fortunes of his family. “Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.” The history of man begins when those nine hundred and thirty years begin to be

counted. Within the Book itself we have the inspired reason for the chronicles that are given in the Old Testament. I. Corinthians x. 11: "They are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come."

Biblical history is the source of all we know of the period before the flood, and of the period after the flood, down to the time of Herodotus, who is called the "Father of History."

It covers a period of four thousand years—from the time when man appears upon the earth, to the establishment of Christianity in all parts of the Roman Empire.

"When considered in respect to the infallible sources whence it is derived, and the long flight of ages which it embraces, it must be regarded as possessing the highest claims to our careful study."

Bible history may be naturally divided into three great, though unequal, periods, extending from the creation of Adam—who is the first man found in any history, monument, or inscription; whose name, time of his creation, and death are matters of record, and from whom his descendants can be traced by name and age, in successive links, for near four thousand years—to the death of Moses; from the death of Moses to the birth of Christ; and from the birth of Christ to the close of the New Testament, about the end of the first century.

The first period covers not less than twenty-five hundred and fifty-three years; the second fourteen hundred and fifty-one years; and the third about one hundred years.

These periods have been called the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian. While these designations are

not entirely satisfactory, they are as good, perhaps, as can be formed. Before the time of Moses, no one person appears to have been charged with introducing a religious polity which could fitly be called by his name.

"God, however, revealed his will to faithful men from time to time, as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and made it their duty to train up their families, at least, in his service and fear.

"Whatever in that early period deserved the name of religious organization or order seems to have been established by these patriarchs, acting in obedience to God; and, therefore, with an eye to its leading teachers, the period may be called the *Patriarchal*. In the second period, by the agency of Moses, a religious polity was established for a single nation—a polity which brought the whole people into definite relations of formal service to God their King. It was a theocracy.

"And in the third period was established, by the agency of Christ and his Apostles, a religious polity for mankind of all ages and climes—a polity to be accepted or rejected by every person, acting for himself in the sight of God, and which demands, as the primary condition of service, a new heart and a right spirit."

We shall make the attempt to sketch the leading events and names of each period.

I. FROM ADAM TO THE DEATH OF MOSES.—The history of this period of twenty-five hundred and fifty-three years is found in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Between Adam and the flood, sixteen hundred and fifty-six years, there are only four women whose names

have been preserved. These are Eve, Adah and Zillah, the wives of Lamech, the first polygamist, and his daughter Naamah.

After the sublime statement, that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," the Bible is confined to the story of man. He was made in the image of God—intelligent, free and upright. Man was first made, then woman from man—husband and wife in fellowship with God and with each other.

They were placed in a garden, to dress it and keep it, and the fruits of which they were permitted to eat—with one exception. By that one prohibition their fidelity was tested, and in the hour of temptation they fell. Thus sin entered, and the unhappy pair—self-condemned and condemned by their Maker—were expelled from the garden. But they were not left entirely without hope, for a Savior was promised, who was to be of the seed of the woman.

Cain (*gotten* or *acquired*) was born, Abel (*breath* or *transitoriness*) was born—these grew up and began to observe the forms of worship for themselves, but the oldest without faith. Then came murder and the flight of Cain, and the separation of the infant race into two families and lines—one irreligious and the other religious.

Seth (*substituted*) was born. The descendants of Cain were Enoch, Irad, Mehujael, Methusael, and Lamech. Lamech was the first to practice polygamy. Of his three sons, Jabal taught the art of tent-making; Jubal the use of musical instruments; and Tubal-Cain the art of working in metals.

The descendants of Seth, who were given to Adam in

the place of Abel, were Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah.

Of these, Enoch was one of the best, and lived a life so well-pleasing to God that he never died, but "God took him," in the three hundred and sixty-fifth year of his age, after he had warned the evil-doers of his day against the impending judgment of God.

Noah was commanded to build an ark, which was to be the means of the preservation of himself, and his wife, and his three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives, and two of every species of "unclean" birds and beasts, and seven of every species accounted "clean."

The waters of the flood prevailed one hundred and fifty days, and then the ark rested on one of the peaks of Ararat. The ark was five hundred and forty-seven feet long, ninety-one feet wide, and fifty-four feet high, and its capacity eighty-one thousand tons burden.

The genealogy of Jesus, the promised Savior, was preserved through the line of Seth from Adam. Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born, Seth was one hundred and five years old when Enos was born, Enos was ninety years old when Cainan was born, Cainan was seventy years old when Mahalaleel was born, Mahalaleel was sixty-five years old when Jared was born, Jared was one hundred and sixty-two years old when Enoch was born, Enoch was sixty-five years old when Methuselah was born, Methuselah was one hundred and eighty-seven years old when Lamech was born, Lamech was one hundred and eighty-two years old when Noah was born, Noah was five hundred and two years old when Shem was born; and Shem was ninety-eight years old

at the time of the flood. Adam lived contemporary with Methuselah two hundred and forty-three years, and Methuselah with Shem for ninety-eight years, Methuselah dying the year of and before the deluge.

After the flood, the human race, through the family of Noah, started on a new career. God made a covenant with Noah that the people of the world should no more be cut off by the waters of a flood; neither should there be any more a flood to destroy the earth—and the bow in the cloud was thereafter to be a token of the covenant between God and Noah. The sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—went out from the ark and possessed the earth. For one hundred and three years there was but one speech and one language. As they increased in numbers, it became evident that sin had not entirely perished in the flood.

In the plain of Shinar they began to build a tower, which was called Babel (*confusion*), and which they designed should reach to heaven. This tower was six hundred and fifty feet high, and was one quarter of a mile square at the base. God frustrated their design by confounding their language, and they were scattered over the earth.

Abram, the son of Terah, was born nineteen hundred and ninety-six years B. C., in Ur of the Chaldees. Seventy-five years after, in obedience to the divine command, he left Ur and went into Canaan, taking with him his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all that he possessed.

When Abraham was one hundred years old Isaac was born, who walked in the footsteps of his father, believing in God. When Isaac was sixty years old Jacob was born,

who accepted the faith and inherited the blessing from his father Isaac. When Jacob was ninety-one years old Joseph was born, who afterward, 1716 B. C., became Governor of Egypt. When famine came upon the land of Canaan, Joseph invited his father and his brethren, a colony of seventy persons, to settle in Egypt. This invitation was accepted, and they settled peaceably in Goshen, in the year 1706 B. C. During the time 1996-1706, from the call of Abram to the descent into Egypt, many events of great interest transpired. Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God, lived; in 1897 B. C., God renewed his covenant with Abram, and his name was changed to Abraham; the rite of circumcision was instituted; Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their wickedness; Abraham's faith was severely tried by the command to offer Isaac, his son, as a burnt-offering; Sarah died at Hebron; Esau sold his birthright to Jacob; Jacob had a vision of a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which the angels of God ascended and descended. He also had a vision at Mahanaim, and wrestled with an angel at Peniel, and his name was changed to Israel (*a prince of God*). In 1715 B. C. the seven years of plenty began in Egypt; in 1708 B. C. the years of famine began, and in 1706 B. C. Jacob and his family went down from Canaan into Egypt. The children of Israel were in Egypt from 1706 B. C. to 1491 B. C., a period of two hundred and fifteen years. The whole land of the Egyptians, except that of the priests, was bought by Joseph for corn. When Jacob was about to die, he first blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, and then his sons, and predicted their subsequent history.



To Judah was assigned the blessing of the first-born, with the promise that from him the Savior should descend. The remains of Jacob were borne back in great state to Palestine, and laid beside those of Abraham, Isaac, and Sarah, in the cave of Machpelah, at Hebron. This occurred sixteen hundred and eighty-nine years B. C.

In 1571 B. C., Moses, the son of Amram and Jochebed, was born. About this time an order was given to cast all the male children of the Israelites into the Nile. Aaron, the brother of Moses, was born in 1574 B. C. About the same time, Job, of Idumea, an Arabian sage, is supposed to have written the book which bears his name. By some Job is supposed to be the Jobab of I. Chronicles i. 44.

Moses was educated at the court of Pharaoh, in a manner becoming the position of an adopted child of the king's daughter.

At forty years of age he slew an unmerciful Egyptian task-master, and hid his body in the sand. When he found that the murder was no secret, he fled to the land of Midian, where he lived for forty years. Here he married Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian, and followed the occupation of a shepherd.

In 1491 B. C. the Lord appeared to him in a burning bush in Horeb, and appointed him to deliver the Israelites from bondage.

Before the deliverance from Egypt was effected, ten plagues were inflicted upon the Egyptians—the water of the Nile was turned into blood; the plague of frogs, of lice, of flies; murrain among cattle; plague of boils and blisters; thunder and hail, with lightning; locusts; dark-

ness; and the destruction of the first-born of man and beast. Before the last plague was executed, the passover was instituted, the Lord sparing the first-born of Israel if the lintels and side-posts of the doors of their houses were sprinkled with blood, when he passed through the land to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians.

Pharaoh finally allowed the people to go out of the country, and then repented and pursued them. He and his army were destroyed in the Red Sea, after the children of Israel had passed safely over.

The three great events of this time were: (1) The crossing of the Red Sea; (2) the giving of the law from Mount Sinai; and (3) the making of the tabernacle. The great changes to which the Israelites were subjected were: (1) Getting out of bondage; (2) going into the wilderness; and (3) entering upon a new life, in new homes, and under new laws.

The law was given in 1491 B. C. The Lord descended in fire on the mountain, and called Moses to the top. The law was given to him, engraved on two tables of stone by the finger of God. The people grew impatient at the long absence of Moses, and induced Aaron to make a golden calf that they might worship it

In 1490 the tabernacle was made, God giving instructions as to how it should be constructed. It was forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high; the court of the tabernacle was one hundred and seventy-five feet long, fifty feet wide, and five feet high. During the march from Mount Sinai to Canaan the patience of Moses was severely tried many times, by the murmurings and insubordination of the people. None, except Caleb

and Joshua, of those who were twenty years old and upward, when they came out of Egypt, were permitted to enter into the promised land. Even Moses, the great leader, who often saved the people, was not permitted to enter Canaan. He led the people to the borders of it, and then, after making his farewell address, and pronouncing his last blessing, he died upon Nebo, "in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord." He died at the age of one hundred and twenty years, and God buried him, and his sepulcher has always remained unknown.

II. FROM THE DEATH OF MOSES TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.—After the death of Moses the children of Israel crossed over the river Jordan into Canaan, under the leadership of Joshua. He led them for twenty-five years, dying in 1426 B. C.

There were four great events in the life of Joshua which are worthy of special attention: (1) The dividing of the waters of the Jordan; (2) the siege and capture of Jericho; (3) the capture of Ai; and (4) the defeat of the five Canaanite kings at the battle of Beth-horon. This great battle was followed by the conquest of the kings of Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, and Hebron. In less than seven years after Joshua entered the land of Canaan he conquered six nations and thirty-one kings.

Upon the death of Joshua the people were governed for fifteen years by elders who outlived Joshua. There were great disorders during this period, owing to the heathen sympathies of the tribes. Their condition grew worse, and God withdrew his presence from them. When they repented, God heard their cry and raised them up

Judges, or deliverers, who were made the instruments to save them from their enemies. The following is the order in which these Judges appeared, and the time of the government of each: Othniel, forty years; Ehud, thirteen years; Shamgar, eighteen years; Deborah and Barak, forty-seven years; Gideon, forty years; Tola, twenty-three years; Jair, twenty-two years; Jephtha, six years; Ibzan, seven years; Elon, ten years; Abdon, eight years; Samson, twenty years; Eli, forty years; and Samuel, twenty years, making in all about three hundred and fourteen years. The terms of these Judges, together with the periods of oppression and rest mentioned in the Book of Judges, amount to four hundred and fifty years, as stated, Acts xiii. 20; but, as the entire interval, from the exodus in 1491 B. C. to the building of Solomon's temple B. C. 1011, is only four hundred and eighty years, all of these periods can not have been successive. Different Judges may have ruled in different parts of the land at the same time. This will serve to explain the difference in the two statements made as to the length of time the Judges ruled Israel.

The times of the Judges were marked by three great evils: a declension of interest in the religion which God had given them; a want of unity among the tribes; and the consequent weakness before their foes. Hence, there was pressing need of a religious reformation, a strong central government, and victory over their enemies. To accomplish this three remarkable men were raised up—Samuel, Saul, and David. Toward the end of his judgeship, the people, seeing that his sons were not likely to follow in his footsteps, the elders of Israel solicited the

appointment of a king. The request was granted, and Saul was privately anointed by Samuel, but afterward publicly chosen and confirmed at Mizpeh. Saul was king from 1095 B. C. to 1055 B. C., a period of forty years.

After Saul had been deprived of the kingdom, David, the youngest son of Jesse, became king and reigned over Israel for forty years. He was succeeded on the throne by his son Solomon, who reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. The reign of Solomon was one of peaceful splendor, and was in strong contrast with the wars of his father David. "It presents a type of the kingdom of Christ in its extensive sway and prosperous abundance (Psalm lxxii.), as the reign of David does of its victories and of its triumphing over all opposition (Psalm ii.)."

Solomon was succeeded by his son Rehoboam, who, by his foolish refusal to listen to the counsel of the old men of his kingdom, brought about the permanent division of the kingdom. Ten tribes rebelled against the house of David, and chose Jeroboam king, so that from that time onward there were the two rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

The kingdom of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, continued for two hundred and fifty-four years, or from B. C. 975 to B. C. 721, when the ten tribes were carried into captivity by Shalmanezzer, King of Assyria, never to return; hence they are called the "lost tribes."

The capital city was Samaria, built by Omri. The number of kings was twenty, beginning with Jeroboam and ending with Hoshea. The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin constituted the kingdom of Judah, which lasted

for three hundred and eighty-seven years. It also had twenty kings, beginning with Rehoboam and ending with Zedekiah. B. C. 588 they were carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. This was the end of Jewish independence. From that time the Jews were under Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Syria, and Rome, until A. D. 70, when they were scattered to this day.

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar he set up a golden image on the plain of Dura, and commanded all his subjects to fall down and worship it. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three Jewish youths who had been carried captive into Babylon, refused, and were cast into a fiery furnace, but by divine aid they escaped unharmed. Daniel, also, a Jewish captive, rose to a very high position because of his interpretation of the king's dream.

Nebuchadnezzar died B. C. 562, and was succeeded by Evil-Merodach, who released Jehoiachin, the last of the royal line of Solomon who was accorded kingly honors. He was succeeded by Belshazzar, who reigned in Babylon for seventeen years. In B. C. 538 he made a great feast, and when in the midst of his drunken revelries some mysterious words were written on the wall. The king, very much alarmed, sent for Daniel, who interpreted the writing to mean that the end of the kingdom had come, and that it would be divided among the Medes and Persians; and that very night the city was captured by Cyrus, the Persian, and Belshazzar was slain.

B. C. 536 Cyrus issued a decree for the return of the Jews to their country. The sacred vessels were restored, and the privilege to rebuild the temple was granted. For seventy years the people had been in captivity, and but

few comparatively availed themselves of the privilege to return. The whole number who went back to Jerusalem was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty Jews, and seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven servants. Although the foundations of the new temple were laid soon after this band of Jews returned to Jerusalem, on account of the opposition of the Samaritans, it was not completed until B. C. 515.

In B. C. 458, another company of exiles, under Ezra, set out for Jerusalem.

In B. C. 444 Nehemiah began to rebuild the walls around the city, and in fifty-two days the city was surrounded with new walls and the ancient towers.

“There were sixteen prophets whose writings are preserved in the Canon. They were distinguished by important characteristics, and were a great power in their several periods of time. They were the national poets of the chosen people, the annalists and historians of their country, the outspoken patriots, the reformers of morals and pure religion, the preachers of righteousness, and exponents of the law, and, most of all, the revealers of God’s grand design of effecting our redemption through Jesus Christ. The sixteen prophets may be divided into four groups: *Prophets of the Northern Kingdom*—Hosea, Amos, Jonah; *Prophets of the Southern Kingdom*—Joel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah; *Prophets of the Captivity*—Ezekiel and Daniel; *Prophets of the Return*—Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

“The four major prophets were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; the twelve minor prophets—Hosea,

Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi."

From the time of Malachi to Christ, a period of three hundred and ninety-seven years, for the history of the Jews, we must consult uninspired records. Of these the most reliable are the writings of Josephus and the first book of the Maccabees, though something may be learned from Pagan sources. The nation was dependent upon foreign power, and its political condition very humiliating. Its religious condition was scarcely any better; so that when the Great Deliverer came but few were prepared to give him a hearty welcome.

Of the history over which we have passed, the Book of Genesis embraces two thousand three hundred and sixty-nine years; Exodus, one hundred and forty-five years; Leviticus, one month; Numbers, thirty-eight years; Joshua, twenty-five years; Judges, two hundred and seventy-one years; I. Samuel, one hundred and fifteen years; II. Samuel, forty years; I. Kings, one hundred and nineteen years; II. Kings, three hundred and eight years; I. Chronicles, a genealogical history from the creation to the death of David, 1015 B. C.; II. Chronicles, from the death of David until the captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, B. C., 588, being four hundred and twenty-seven years; Daniel, seventy years; Ezra, eighty years; Nehemiah, twelve years; and Malachi, twenty-three years, which brings us to the end of the Old Testament, three hundred and ninety-seven years before Christ.

III. FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO THE END OF THE FIRST CENTURY.—The Christian era begins in the thir-



tieth year of the reign of Augustus Cæsar, and in what is known in history as the "golden age of Rome."

In the New Testament history we have the description of the founding of a new religious economy, a spiritual kingdom, which is to fill the whole earth with the churches of Christ.

Among the events worthy of special notice, up to the day of Pentecost, when the Church of Christ was formally established and the second era of New Testament history begins, are the following: the birth of John the Baptist; the appearance of the angel to the shepherds, who visit Jesus; the circumcision of Jesus, and his presentation in the temple; the visit of the wise men, and the flight into Egypt, and the return from Egypt; the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan; his temptation and its result; the marriage feast in Cana in Galilee; after this Jesus goes up to Jerusalem to the Passover, and while there drives the traders out of the temple; after the imprisonment of John the Baptist he retires into Galilee for a time, and afterward, passing through Samaria, he makes disciples; he heals the leper and paralytic, and an infirm man at Bethesda in Jerusalem; he heals a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, and teaches the lesson that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; he preaches his memorable "Sermon on the Mount," and raises the son of the widow of Nain; the Scribes and Pharisees seek for a sign and are reproved; Jesus speaks in parables, and gives his reason why he uses them; the transfiguration and his discourse with the three disciples as they were descending the mountain; the seventy disciples are sent out; Jesus visits Zaccheus, the chief of

the publicans; he prepares to eat the last Passover, and foretells the danger that would surround his disciples—that Judas would betray him, and Peter would deny him, and that they all would be scattered; the prayer, the awful agony, and the betrayal in the garden; his trial, his sentence, and his crucifixion, his burial, and his resurrection; his great commandment to his Apostles and his ascension into heaven.

After ten days the Pentecost came and the Apostles were endued with the promised power from on high. They then began to preach a crucified but risen Lord as the hope of the world. A great many became obedient to the faith. But the disciples were not to dwell in ease and comfort at home—they were persecuted and scattered abroad; but, wherever they went, they preached the word.

“It appears, however, that none of the eleven Apostles were altogether fitted to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. But, among those who had been most engaged in exterminating the new sect, was Saul—a young man of strict integrity, of heroic temper, who had been educated in the school of Gamaliel, a distinguished Pharisee. To him, on the way to Damascus, the Lord appeared in visible splendor, making him a new man, and pronouncing him a chosen vessel to bear the truth to the Gentiles. In due time, though not hastily, he entered upon his work, and prosecuted it with great success. Nothing could surpass his energy, enterprise, firmness, flexibility, self-denial. He preached Christ in Syria, in Asia Minor, in Macedonia, in Achaia, and in Rome. When the converted Jews were zealous for the law of Moses, insisting upon the circumcision of the Gentiles, he withstood this

attempt to unite Judaism with Christianity, and vindicated the freedom of the churches on Pagan soil. No Apostle did so much by his voice and pen for the spread of the gospel."

The rest of the Apostles labored with great zeal, and declared the truth with such power that at the end of the first century almost every part of the known world had been reached, and the name of Jesus had been heard in the homes of all people; and the Church was well prepared for the conquest of the world.

## CHAPTER V.—THE BIBLE DISPENSATIONS: WHAT THEY ARE, AND THEIR RE- LATIONS TO EACH OTHER.

“It must be remembered by him, who would be well instructed in the kingdom of heaven, that the whole Bible comprehends three distinct dispensations of religion, or three different administrations of mercy to the human race. These are the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages of the world. There are three high-priesthoods, viz: that of Melchizedek, that of Aaron, and that of Jesus the Messiah; and under each of these will be found a different economy of things. A knowledge of the leading peculiarities of each is essential to an accurate knowledge of any one of them, and the right interpretation of the Bible. It is a standing maxim in religion, that the priesthood being changed, *there is of necessity* a change of the law pertaining to *acceptable* worship. After the close of one dispensation, and the commencement of a new one, no man could be accepted in his approaches to God by the preceding economy. Moses, nor Aaron, nor the people of the Jews, after they departed from Sinai, dare approach God by sacrifice, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were wont to do. Before we can feel any confidence in our interpretation of any law, commandment, or institution of religion, a previous question must always be decided, viz: *To what dispensation did it belong?*”

The Patriarchal Dispensation embraces the period between the creation and the giving of the law of Moses; the Jewish, between the giving of the law and the coronation of Christ; and the Christian, between the coronation of Christ and his second coming in the clouds of heaven.

The characteristics of each one of these dispensations, and their relation one to another, can be best understood by a review of the several covenants of God.\*

I. THE COVENANT OF LIFE AND LIBERTY.—When God created our first parents, he gave to them a guarantee of liberty and life, secured by an immutable charter, on condition of obedience. The seal of this covenant was the tree of life, by the fruit of which our progenitors might have lived forever. They did not keep the covenant, lost life and liberty, and were exiled from the Garden of Eden.—Genesis ii. iii.

II. THE COVENANT WITH NOAH.—Genesis ix.—The world had been destroyed by a flood on account of wickedness. Noah and his family alone escaped. With these God made a covenant for all coming time, never again to repeat this calamity. Its seal was the bow in the cloud.

III. THE COVENANT CONCERNING ABRAHAM AND HIS POSTERITY.†

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\* The word covenant is of Latin origin—from two words *con*, together, and *venio*, to come; and hence it literally means, *a coming together*. There are three things, either expressed or implied, in every covenant, viz: the covenanter, the covenantee, and the things stipulated. Hence, also, any *promise* of God may be called a *covenant*.

† These two covenants with Abraham are found in Genesis xii. 1-3: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and

## IV. THE COVENANT CONCERNING CHRIST.

The student of the Bible will remember that when Adam and Eve were banished from the garden they were not left without a promise.—Genesis iii. 14, 15. Here is the first promise concerning Christ. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* God having promised deliverance and restoration through the *seed of the woman*, now makes choice of Abram as the one through whom this seed should come. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"—Genesis xxii. 18.

"The word *seed*, as it occurs in some of these passages, requires particular attention. At first this was probably understood, by Abraham himself, in a general sense, as including all his posterity; but the promise was afterward limited to Isaac (Genesis xvii. 19-21); and then to Jacob (Genesis xxv. 23); and finally to Christ (Galatians iii. 3). And, hence, the covenant of which this promise was made the basis, is by the same Apostle called, 'The covenant concerning Christ.' This is the same which is also frequently called the new covenant, and which is

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make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." So far it is a covenant with Abraham, with reference to his fleshly posterity. "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This is what Paul calls the "covenant concerning Christ."—Galatians iii. 17. Abram was to be blessed with a double posterity—one purely of the flesh, the other of the Spirit. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Galatians iii. 29. These promises were repeated again and again to Abraham, and renewed to Isaac and Jacob. Genesis xv. 5; xvii. 1-9; xviii. 18; xxii. 15-18; xxvi. 1-5; xxviii. 10-16.

fully developed in the New Testament. And hence we find, moreover, that all the subjects of the new covenant are, by the divine arrangement, regarded and reckoned as the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.—Romans iv. 11-16; Galatians iii. 7, 8, 29. But in these repeated promises of God to Abraham, there is obviously something more than what relates merely to Christ and the subjects of the new covenant. There is here also a promise of *nationality* which relates to Abraham's seed according to the flesh, and which was afterward made the basis of the Sinaic or old covenant. So this promise was evidently regarded by Moses and other Hebrew prophets, as we find in the following passages—Exodus xxxii. 13; Joshua xxiii. 14. True, indeed, these two promises or covenants were very closely connected. The latter had reference to the type, and the former to the anti-type; and hence it is that they are often spoken of on the principle of double reference, as if they were identical. \* \* But that these covenants were, from the beginning, regarded by God as two distinct arrangements, is perfectly clear from their different allegorical representations, given in the history of Hagar and Sarah." See Galatians iv. 19-31.

We must keep steadily in view the purpose of God to bring about redemption through the Christ, who was to be the *seed* of the *woman*, and also the *seed* of *Abraham*. Every other element is subordinate to this. There were two grand social institutions developed from the two great promises made to Abraham: one concerning his natural, the other concerning his spiritual offspring. "One family exhausts the first covenant, while the second unites in one

community all the faithful of all the families of the earth. The first promises to all its subjects all worldly and temporal blessings; the second guarantees to all its subjects spiritual and eternal blessings. \* \* The *flesh* of Abraham is the center of attraction in the one, while the *faith* of Abraham is the center of attraction in the other."

A purpose to build a tower implies a purpose to gather together the material, to employ workmen, to erect the scaffold, etc., without which it could not be erected. The purpose to bring Christ into the world through Abraham implies that Abraham and his posterity shall be specially preserved. Hence we have, as a subordinate covenant—

V. THE COVENANT CONCERNING HIS INHERITANCE.—Genesis xv.—This granted to Abraham and his posterity the land of Canaan forever. There was no spiritual blessing in this. We have also—

VI. THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION.—Genesis xvii. 9-14.—In this covenant God promised—1. That he would bless Abraham himself. (Circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before he was circumcised.—Romans iv. 11. In this respect circumcision was to Abraham what it was not to any of his posterity.) 2. That he would bless all his posterity, whether by Sarah, Hagar, or Keturah. 3. That he would make of his posterity "many nations;" that "kings shall come out of thee," etc. 4. That he would give to him, and to his seed after him, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.

The provisions of this covenant were—1. That every male child of the seed of Abraham, and every servant bought with money by Abraham or his posterity, should



be circumcised. 2. That this should be an everlasting covenant; that is, coexistent with the general covenant of which it was an element. 3. That death should be the penalty for neglect of it.

“My covenant shall be in your *flesh*.” The covenant of circumcision was carnal, political, national. There is nothing to indicate that it promised anything beyond the temporal things named in it.\*

These covenants were all made during the patriarchal age of the world—a period of over twenty-five hundred years. During this period they seem only to have had family religion. The priesthood was after the order of Melchizedek. The laws by which they were governed were probably traditional. When families developed into nations there grew up a necessity for a civil government. The descendants of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, though strangers in a foreign land many years (Genesis xv. 13), grew into a mighty people. When God delivered them from Egyptian bondage he organized them into a nation by giving them a law. Hence we have—

VII. THE COVENANT AT HOREB.—Deuteronomy v. 1, 2, 3 —This covenant was made with the descendants of Jacob, 1491 B. C. It was given from Mount Sinai, and is generally called the law of Moses. This was the be-

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\* While neither of these two covenants were spiritual, they nevertheless became types. Canaan is a type of the everlasting inheritance of the children of Abraham by faith in Jesus; and circumcision is made typical of the cutting of the body of sin from the soul, and the subsequent sealing of it by the Holy Spirit. —Romans ii. 28, 29; Philippians iii. 3; Colossians ii. 9-12; Ephesians i. 13, 14.

ginning of the Jewish Dispensation. The law of circumcision, having laid upon all the descendants of Abraham a perpetual obligation, was also incorporated into the law of Moses.—Leviticus xii. 3.

The law of Moses was made chiefly for the purpose of civil government; but the government was made in such a way as best to serve the purpose of God in bringing about redemption through the promised seed. It was both political and ecclesiastical—political, because like other nations they needed to be governed; ecclesiastical, because God would commit to them his “oracles,” through them prevent the general spread of idolatry; illustrate, in his dealings with them and the surrounding nations, the principles of righteousness and truth; and “give a pictorial outline of the scheme of redemption, by means of certain types and symbols, rites and ceremonies, addressed to the senses.” The moral principles of the law were “holy, just and good.”—Romans vii. 12. The positive and ceremonial law laid upon them burdens which were hard to be borne.—Acts xv. 10. The principles of God’s dealings with men are eternal; and therefore we find in the Jewish law what we will find in every law of God. They were taught to love God with all the soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbors as themselves. Nevertheless, this covenant, *as such*, was temporal. It was only subordinate to the general arrangement. Paul says it was “added on account of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.”—Galatians iii. 19. It was added to the promise concerning Christ, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one,

And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”—Galatians iii. 16, 17. The law was added to the promise, till the *seed* should come. When the Christ set up his kingdom, the law of Moses had accomplished its purpose and passed away.

The student will find much in this covenant, both moral and ceremonial, to engage his attention. The Decalogue, and statutes regulating their relations to God and to each other, the burnt-offerings sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, peace-offerings, meat-offerings, drink-offerings, the annual feasts, the commemorative institutions, the tabernacle furniture and service, the ceremonial cleansings, the years of release and jubilee—all these, and more, are full of interest and profit. We call attention, however, to two special covenants. 1. *Concerning the priesthood of Aaron*. “Thou shalt anoint the sons of Aaron, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.” Exodus xl. 13–15; Numbers xxv. 12, 13. During the patriarchal age it seems that the father of every family officiated at the altar.—Genesis iv. 3, 5; xxxi. 54; Exodus xxiv. 4–8. But, after the erection of the tabernacle, none could approach unto the altar except the family of Aaron.—Exodus xxviii. 1–4.

2. *Concerning the throne of David*. God, by covenant, gave the throne unto David and his seed forever: “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto

David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations."—Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4; II. Samuel vii. 13. In this priesthood the student will find, in the one high priest and his offices, the type of Jesus as the "High Priest of our profession;" and in respect of the oath to David concerning the throne, he will find the promise fulfilled and the oath kept, in this, that "David's Son and David's Lord," our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is now upon the throne forever. See Acts ii. 30; Hebrews i. 8; Zechariah vi. 12, 13. These facts are significant, as showing that God did not lose sight of his purpose. The Jewish law and nation were only instruments for opening up the way for the coming Redeemer. All through this dispensation there are types and symbols—shadows of the things to come—types of the sacrifice of Christ, types of the priesthood of Christ, types of the atonement of Christ, types of the world, the Church of Christ, and heaven. Besides these were prophecies concerning the character and work of the Messiah; concerning the beginning, growth, triumphs, and perpetuity of his kingdom. Details were given as to time and place of his birth, and circumstances of his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, until there was a general expectation on the part of the Jews as to his coming and his blessings. Among the rest we have the prophecy concerning—

VIII. THE NEW COVENANT.—Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34; Hebrews viii. 8-13.—Paul quotes this declaration of the prophet, applies it to the Christian covenant, and adds: "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is

ready to vanish away.”\* The reader will note several things that are new about this covenant.

1. The covenant of circumcision was in the “flesh;” the covenant at Horeb was written on “tables of stone;” but of the new covenant God says: “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.”

2 All the infants, born in the family of Abraham, were covenant children; but they did not, for they could not, “know the Lord.” Therefore they had to be taught to know the Lord. Under the new covenant there would be no occasion for this teaching, inasmuch as the law would be written in their minds and hearts before they could become covenantees.

3. Under the old covenant the willful transgressor was punished without mercy (Hebrews x. 28); but under the new covenant God says: “I will forgive their iniquities;” “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness.”

4. Under the old covenant there was the remembrance of sin every year.—Hebrews x. 3; Leviticus xvi. 21, 22. The “blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins.” But under the new covenant God says, “I will remember your sins no more.”

Jeremiah wrote this prophecy about 600 B. C. In the days of Malachi, 397 B. C., the old covenant was still in force: “Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant,

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\* In proof that the old covenant is no longer in force, the reader is referred to Matthew v. 16, 17; Matthew xi. 11; Matthew xvii. 5; Matthew xxviii. 18-20; Acts xv. 6-29; Galatians iv. 30; Ephesians ii. 14, 15; Colossians ii. 14; II. Corinthians iii. 6-11; Romans iii. 21, 28. Whatever was valuable in the old reappears in the new.

which I commanded unto him in Horeb." This, the last prophetic admonition in the Old Testament, is in harmony with the spirit of all the prophets, whose mission seemed always to be to call the people back to the covenant of their fathers. But when John, the forerunner of Christ, and the greatest of all the prophets, came, he never so much as alluded to the Sinaic covenant. Jesus came next. His mission was to his "own"—"the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He reproved his nation for sin and apostasy, but made no effort to call them back to the covenant God made at Horeb. He did not so much as use the word covenant until he instituted the Supper, when he said of the symbolic wine, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This significant silence suggests that the old covenant was not to be enforced, and that the time for the new had not yet come.

Jesus had said, Matthew v. 18: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He had himself kept the law, had attended all the national feasts, and when he instituted the Supper, he had just celebrated the last Passover with his disciples. Soon he was himself to be the Paschal Lamb, offered for the salvation of the world; soon he was to sleep the last Jewish Sabbath in the grave; soon he was to rise from the dead, show himself to his disciples, commission them to preach the gospel to every creature, and then ascend to receive his crown, his throne and scepter, and rule till his foes became his footstool. We go forward fifty days from this crucifixion, to the next Pentecost—the annual feast that commemorated the

giving of the Sinaic covenant—and come to the appropriate occasion for the giving a new covenant. The old covenant had been given fifty days after the first Passover; the new covenant was given fifty days after the last Passover—Acts ii.

1. The house of Israel and house of Judah were present, with whom the covenant was to be made.

2 The Mediator was present. Paul says, “We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.” “For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest” “But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” “For if the first covenant had been faultless, there should no place have been sought for the second.” Peter announced that Jesus, *the* Christ, had taken his seat “on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.” His priesthood and the new covenant have a simultaneous beginning.

3. Three thousand were “pricked in the heart;” the “law put in their inward parts, and written on their hearts.”

4. “They knew the Lord;” they gladly received the word and obeyed the gospel.

5. God forgave their sins and remembered them no more.

This was the beginning of the Christian Dispensation. Peter also said the “promise” (of salvation) “is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Again, “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant God

made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."—Acts iii. 25, 26. Turning to the tenth chapter of Acts the reader will find the call of the Gentiles. They were received upon equal footing with the Jews, and upon the same conditions of salvation; so that we have not only the "new covenant made with the house of Judah and Israel," but also the fulfillment of the promise, "In thee and thy seed" (which is Christ) "*shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*" Jews and Gentiles were received, because they "were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

We may mark prominently these differences between the Christian and Jewish Dispensations.

1. "The Jewish institution, and the people under it, are alike carnal. 'Carnal ordinances,' says Paul, were imposed on them until the time of reformation." They had *letter* and *symbol*, but they had not the spirit and the reality. They had indeed the word addressed to the ear, and the picture to the eye; but that which was spoken they neither understood nor obeyed, and that which was a type they could not read—"for they could not see to the end, or meaning, of that which is now abolished." Paul calls it *letter*, *type*, and *shadow*, while with him the new covenant is *spirit*, *righteousness*, and *life*. The *letter* killeth, while the *spirit* giveth life. It is also called the "ministration of condemnation," while the gospel is the "ministration of righteousness." The former indeed was gloriously introduced, but much more gloriously the latter.

2. "As the body to the spirit, so stood the Jewish to the Christian institution in many prominent points of



view. As the spirit dwells in the body, so the gospel dwelt in the Levitical institution. When that died, the spirit, or that indicated by all its ordinances, alone survived; so that while that religion sanctified to the purifying of the flesh only, the Christian sanctifies the spirit and through it the soul and body. 'We therefore serve in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.' 'Christ is the end of the law for justification to every one that believeth.' The ritual of Moses, 'stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers ordinances concerning the flesh, imposed on the Jews until the time of reformation.' We then serve a better tabernacle than did the Jewish people. For their sacrifices we have the slain Lamb of God; for their deliverance from penal, temporal sufferings, through the blood of bulls and goats, we have 'justification from all things,' through faith in the blood of the Messiah; for their legal purification by the water of separation, we have the sanctification of the Spirit through faith in the blood of Christ, and baptism into his death; for their oil of consecration we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, by which we are led into all truth and holiness; for their national adoption we have a personal and filial adoption into the family of God, by which we feel that we are sons, and can say, 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'"

3 "The Christian institution is addressed to the understanding, the heart, the conscience. It first presents itself to the understanding; it works its way into the heart; it seizes the affections, and induces men to *come*, not to be carried or borne by physical necessity to Christ. 'A willing people in the day of thy power shall come to

thee.' Not so the antecedent institution. Men were, by necessity, born members of it. There was no appeal to the understanding, no addresses to the conscience, no motives addressed to the heart to win over a people to the Jewish institution. They were Jews, not by choice, but by necessity; they were compelled to be members of that Church just as they were compelled to be born. They were indeed born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit, as preparatory to admission into that Church.

4. "No one preached to the Jews that they must be born again before the time of Jesus. We have no regeneration in the law of Moses. The Jewish elect are all chosen in Abraham's flesh; hence they sent out no missionaries. There was no gospel in the law but for the Jews. On the contrary, Christianity is catholic in its spirit and proselyting in its character. It contemplates a great community, gathered out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. It makes provision for them all. \* \* Jesus sends his Apostles into all the world, and commands them to convert all nations; he establishes the doctrine of personal liberty, of freedom of choice, and of personal responsibility, by commanding every man to judge, reason, and act for himself." "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." His was the spirit of a true philanthropy. "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." The Patriarchal

age was starlight, the Jewish was moonlight, the Christian is sunlight. "The Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in his beams," and "life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel."

## CHAPTER VI.—THE JEWISH TABERNACLE.

THE tabernacle, the center of all Judaism, was a magnificent movable structure, erected at a vast expense by Moses, according to the pattern which God showed him on the mount. It was so framed as to admit of being taken to pieces and put together again at pleasure. It was the model of the glorious temple that was erected nearly five hundred years afterward, by Solomon, in Jerusalem. The materials from which it was built were provided —

1. From a *tax* of a half-shekel, levied from each male Israelite above twenty years old, rich and poor alike, as a ransom or atonement for their souls.

2. But chiefly from the *free-will* offerings of the people. These offerings were very liberal.

TYPE AND SYMBOL.—Before we consider the contents of the tabernacle and its court, it is necessary that we have a clear understanding of the terms, type and symbol.

1. A type is a figure, or representation, of something to come; and it is no longer a type when the thing typified comes to be actually exhibited.

2. But a symbol is a sign by which one knows or infers a thing—a sign included in the idea which it represents; as the lion is the *symbol* of courage, the lamb is the *symbol* of meekness or patience.

We frequently blunder in talking upon the subject of the tabernacle, because of the confusion in our minds re-

garding types and symbols. These words are not strict synonyms, though they are often used as such.

The "Church of God" was typified, and the "kingdom of God" was symbolized. Christ is often spoken of as a King, but never as "King of the Church." He is mentioned frequently as a Priest, but never is it said he is "Priest over a kingdom."

It is true that we have combined in Christ what we had in Melchizedek, "King and Priest." As king, he was a *symbol* of Christ as King; as a priest, he was a *type* of Christ as Priest.

Now the tabernacle and its furniture were a type of the Church, but were not a symbol of anything.

The image of Nebuchadnezzar was a "symbol," but not a type of anything. The beasts of Daniel were "symbols," not types. A type must have a thing exactly like itself for the thing it typifies. For instance: if I step into a printer's office, and take from his case a letter "C," ink it, and stamp it on a piece of clean white paper, it brings out a letter "C"—not a leaden block, as it was intended to typify *only a letter "C."* Again: the loaves of the presence, renewed every seventh day, typified the loaf of the presence, or the "Lord's Supper," to be eaten every seventh day. It was the seventh day that was typified, and the loaf was an accessory or auxiliary, and yet the loaves are alike. Now a symbol is not at all like what it symbolizes. Take the four beasts of Daniel—they symbolized living men and women, aggregated into empires or kingdoms, with a kingly head. The ten horns symbolized ten men who were kings. The symbol may now be shown. Any beast having a horn

always makes it his weapon of attack—offensive or defensive—hence there is the beast's power. But the horn bears no resemblance to a man, while a letter "C" on paper looks like a letter "C" cast in metal. A table with twelve loaves upon it does look like a table with one loaf on it; a seventh day looks like any other seventh day; a laver with pure water in it looks like or may be a picture of a large body of pure water.

THE TABERNACLE AND COURT.—These were situated in the *midst* of the twelve tribes; but no tent, save those of the Levites, might be pitched nearer to the court than three thousand feet. Space forbids giving the reason for this, and the manner of presenting offerings as we would like. In brief, it was to teach the Jews the idea of holiness. Previous to this time the word "holy" was unborn.

The court and tabernacle stood east and west. The court was one hundred and fifty by seventy-five feet. The fence was made of fine twined linen, seven and a half feet high, fastened to a silver rod by means of silver hooks. At the eastern end was a beautiful gateway of linen, woven with blue purple and crimson colors. Right up to this gateway, just inside, stood the altar of sacrifice. All outside of the court was called the *worldly* sanctuary. Here all the mistakes of life were committed, and here all resolves to reform were made. The difference between a sinning Jew *without* faith, and one *with* faith, was the altar and sacrifice. The sinning Jew knew there was but one place he could go for pardon, and that was to the *north* side of *that* altar; and but *one* offering he could bring, if able to provide it, and that was a female lamb or kid; and but *one* way he could offer it, and that

was by placing his hands upon its forehead and confessing to the priest his sins, after which, with his own hand, he cut its throat, while the priest caught its blood and cast it in a sheet over the altar, so that every side was touched by it. The priest then flayed, disemboweled, and cut it in pieces; and, if a perfect offering, laid such portions on the altar as the law required. From the time of the slaying of the offering, the sinner is "represented" by the priest in the remainder of the worship.

All this is a type of our leaving the world and coming to Christ, who is our Altar, Sacrifice, and "All in All." We come to him without a mental reservation, and offer him our body, soul, and spirit. We confess our lost and undone condition without his help and mediation. By faith we lay hold of him and accept of him as our Sacrifice. And, on leaving the world, he is the first thing we find.

But we are not "represented" on earth by a priest, as those were who were under the law; for in the Church of God all members are priests.

THE LAVER.—The size of the laver is not given, but all authority confirms the impression made on the mind of the Bible reader, that it must have been quite large, as every offering had to be purified by washing; and the priests, when consecrated to the office of the priesthood, were washed "*in the water*," at the door of the tabernacle, in the presence of "all the people." See Dr. Tafel's interlineary translation of the Hebrew, published at Philadelphia; also, "*en hudati*" of the Septuagint.—Exodus xl. 12; Leviticus viii. 6.

But why does the high priest stop at the laver, after

offering the sacrifice? We have said he "represented" the sinning Jew after the slaying of the sin-offering. The priest, catching the blood and casting it over the altar, in flaying and disemboweling the sacrifice, and offering it, became covered with blood, fat, and filth, necessarily. To appear in the house of God, thus covered, would be to receive the death penalty. This blood and filth must be *removed*. Water is the only antithesis of them.

The world quotes several types of baptism—the flood furnishing two.

1. Translatory from old world to new, or ante to post diluvian world.—Colossians i. 13.

2. Salvatory antitype.—I. Peter iii. 18-21.

3. Passage of the Red Sea salvatory—burial and resurrection. Antitype, I. Corinthians x., and Romans vi.

4. Laver. This is the only *cleansing* type—the cleansing or pardon of sin. See Acts xxii. 16. See Wesley's notes on this passage; also Lange's. See Dr. Seiss, in "Gospel in Leviticus, or Holy Types," pages 143 to 145. Hebrews viii. 11-19, and to 28.

The priest had no use for the laver, unless *filthy*. The priest's washing was for the "filth of the flesh;" then, putting on clean white robes, he is ready to enter the "holy place"—type of the *Church*.

So the altar is a type of *sin and pollution*; the laver a type of purification. The sinner, all polluted with sin, comes to Christ (having offered himself as we have seen at the altar) through baptism; becoming consecrated not only as a *priest* by this washing, which was not to wash away "filth," but to answer a "good conscience;" and



thus the sinner becomes *purified*, and arises with new clean garments of *righteousness*.

Again—the blood of the kid is offered at the altar as a type of *sin and pollution*. The laver of water *alone* is offered as a type of *purification*; and water baptism is the *antitype*, or it has none.



THE TABERNACLE AND GOLDEN LAMP-STAND.—We now approach the building, or tabernacle proper. It was forty-five feet long, and fifteen feet wide and high, and divided into two rooms. The first, called the “holy place,” was thirty feet long by fifteen feet wide and high; the second, a perfect cube of fifteen feet, called “holy of holies.” The light of day was excluded from the building. The light of the “holy place” came from the seven-branched golden lamp-stand, which, with its snuffers and

dishes, was valued at twenty-seven thousand dollars. The oil used was the pure beaten olive oil. No one might manufacture oil after the manner of that used in this chandelier. If the priest neglected the lamp, the beauty of the "holy place" could not be seen. The lamp-stand, lamps, oil, and the burning of the oil, stand for the "word."

The Psalmist says: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a lantern to my path."

The Savior said: "All things which are written in the law, prophets, and psalms, must be fulfilled concerning me." The law pointed clearly to him in Deuteronomy xviii. 18, etc. The prophets—Isaiah ii. 2; liii.; Micah iv., *et al.* Psalms in numerous places.

The center stem represents Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John write about him, and give us one complete life of our Savior.

Matthew wrote for his own people—the Jews; Mark, it is believed, wrote for the Romans and Italians; Luke, for the Grecians; John wrote for the Asiatics. They worshiped "light"—John calls Jesus "*the Light*."

The "Acts of Apostles."

In the law, prophets, and psalms, we are constantly reading about some great personage *to come*. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we seem to stand in his august presence; but when we read the "Acts of Apostles" we are reading about a Mighty Being, who has visited the earth and left it. We are here told how we may enjoy him here, and go to him when we die.

The fifth lamp represents the twenty-one Epistles. In the "Acts of Apostles" we are told how to become sol-

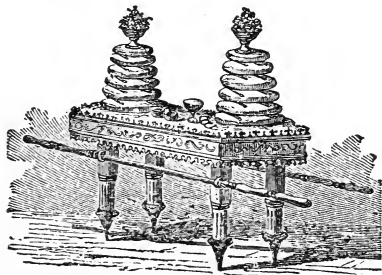
diers of the cross; and in the twenty-one Epistles we are informed how to regulate our conduct as we fight in the grand army of the Lord.

This division of the lamp-stand also looks or points back to Christ. The seventh lamp is represented by the Book of Revelation.

Thus we see that Christ is "the First and the Last," "the Beginning and the End," the "Alpha and the Omega."

As the "holy place" was a type of the Church, and the lamp-stand its light, and *only* light, so the "word of God" is the only *light* of the Church. To manufacture any other light for God's children may be attended with greater punishment than that which was to visit the offender who would dare to make oil like that which was burned "before the Lord."

All in the Bible previous to Christ's birth pointed forward to his coming. All in it after his death points back to his glorious deeds in life and tragic death, all on account of "our transgressions" and "our iniquities."



THE TABLE OF SHEW BREAD.--This piece of sacred furniture stood on the right hand of the holy place, as

you entered the apartment, and opposite the golden lamp-stand. It was three feet (thirty-six inches) long, two feet three inches (twenty-seven inches) high, and eighteen inches wide. It is called sometimes, and perhaps more properly, the "table of the presence." It was made of shittim and acacia wood, called by the Jews "never-dying wood."

ITS USE.—When the children of Israel escaped from Egyptian bondage, they passed through a channel made for them in the Red Sea. Paul says, in I. Corinthians x 2: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." In about forty-two days after their departure from Egypt, they were about to starve and die because of giving out of food brought by them from Egypt. To avert so direful a calamity, as soon as they found their lives were no longer in their own hands, but dependent upon some Superior Power, they appealed to their leader and deliverer for help. Moses petitioned God on their behalf, and God sent manna from heaven in the morning, out of which they made their bread, and which saved and perpetuated their lives.

Afterward Moses commanded the priests.—Exodus xvi. 32, etc. This is the thing which the Lord commanded: "Fill an omer" ( $5\frac{1}{10}$  pints) "of manna, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt," etc. Aaron did so for a memorial. Memorial of what? The saving of the children of Israel. See Leviticus xxvi. 5-9. Jesus said, John vi. 49: "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. I am the living bread

which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever.

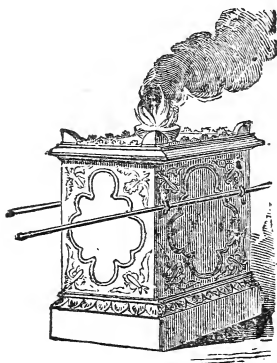
The law commanded that the priests should see that twelve cakes were baked weekly, to be placed on the table every Sabbath; the old ones to be eaten by those in the holy place. Each loaf represented one of the twelve tribes, and was made of twelve quarts of finely ground flour. Why were they to eat it? As a memorial. But a memorial of what? Of the bread (manna) which saved their lives in the wilderness.

From time immemorial a table has been regarded as an emblem of fellowship, or friendship. Luke xxii. 21: "Behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table" 30: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Now, as followers of Christ, the true children of God partake of the antitype of the shew-bread on the Lord's Day, for what? "Do this in remembrance of me," says Jesus. Why? Because I am the true manna that came down from heaven to save your spiritual lives when perishing. As Israel commemorated the fall of manna in the wilderness, that saved them from a physical death, so Jesus desired a memorial to be observed by the *true* Israel, as he is the *true* and *heavenly* manna that saves all, who believe in and obey him, from an eternal dying.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR.—This article of sacred furniture was several feet farther from the entrance of the holy place than the lamp-stand and table of shew-bread.

It was four-sided and square, and stood immediately

in front of the beautiful vail. Every morning and evening, simultaneous with the offering of burnt-offering, upon the outside altar, a priest, with fire from that altar, took a handful of stacte, onycha galbanum and pure frankincense in equal parts, and putting the fire in the golden vessel on the altar, dropped upon it the incense, which quickly filled the building with a dark cloud, and a "sweet perfume unto the Lord." The common priest might offer incense, and while offering it he was nearer the symbol of God's presence than at any other time.



The golden altar and incense are a type of prayer, and the saint is never so near God as when, as a worshiper, he bows at his feet and calls upon him out of a pure heart to accept gratitude for unnumbered mercies and implore pardon for wrongs committed against so pure and holy a Being. By the priest this service was *never neglected*. How sad the reflection that under the substance (gospel) of which the golden altar was a "shadow," "figure," the *Christian* priest should be found neglecting this sweet

privilege of holy communion daily with his Maker and Redeemer.

John the revelator assures us our prayers are sealed in golden vials, to be poured out before the throne of God. How strangely the antitype of this altar has been used! It has been carried out of the holy place—the *Church*—and placed, not only out in the world, but *beyond the altar of sacrifice*, and the sinner invited to the altar of prayer before he sees the altar of *burnt-offerings*. Under the law a Kohathite might not see the golden altar under *penalty of death*, much less offer incense. (See Sunday-school lesson, February 24, 1878—King Uzziah, etc.) In Hebrews viii. ix. and x., Paul gives a recapitulation of the tabernacle service, and he calls it a “figure” only of better things in the gospel. The altar was the last article approached under the law. No one will dispute it. But what does the antitype say of it? When I went to school, the teacher told the class in arithmetic that when proving a sum in addition we found the same result in adding the columns downward we did in adding upward, we might be satisfied our work was correct. Let us try this rule here. By common consent the Church, set up in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, is regarded as the model Church.

First—Peter preached in the worldly sanctuary; the people heard, believed, accepted Christ, and offered themselves at the altar of sacrifice; they asked what they should do; they already believed—next step, *repent* (Acts ii.), then be baptized for the remission of sins, and then they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Three thousand obeyed the command; and it is said

“they continued steadfastly in the *Apostle's doctrine* and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in *prayers*. So we find the New Testament order precisely like the picture, or figure, or type, in the old order of things.

C. H. M., in his “notes” on Exodus, says: “The priesthood being instituted, as in preceding chapters, we are here introduced to the position of true priestly worship and communion. The order is marked and instructive, and moreover precisely corresponds with the *believer's experience*. At the brazen altar he sees the ashes of his sins; he then sees himself linked with one who, though personally pure and spotless, so that he could be anointed without blood, has nevertheless associated himself in life, righteousness and favor; and, finally, in the golden altar, the preciousness of Christ as the material on which the divine affections feed. Thus it is ever—there *must* be a brazen altar and a priest *before* there can be a golden altar and incense.”

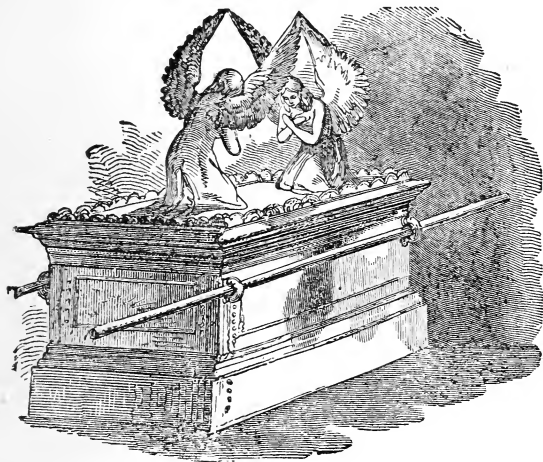
In the very nature of things, prayer belongs to the citizen, the priest—*by right*; to the alien a privilege. See Cornelius, Acts x.; also, John x. 31.

BEAUTIFUL VAIL.—This was a type of the body of Christ. It was passed but once a year, by the high priest only, and then not without blood.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES.—This apartment was a perfect cube of fifteen feet. The ark of God was its only article of furniture. It was of box-like shape, three feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide and high, covered inside and outside with gold. In it, *at first*, were the tables of stone. It was covered with a solid lid of gold, with two cherubim, all of one piece of beaten work.



Between the wings of the cherubim rested the Shechinah, the symbolic presence of God. "Shechinah" is not a Bible word, but one that ought to be. We have passed from *nature*, through *grace*, and now we are in the "holy place," or *glory*. He who inhabiteth eternity dwelleth here. The day fixed by law for entering this apartment



was the tenth day of the seventh month, or *at-onement* or *reconciliation* day, when God became one with his people. On the morning of this day no Jew knew whether he would live to see the going down of the sun. Every one was to "*afflict his soul*." Only the high priest might lawfully enter this apartment, and even he must not appear in the royal robes of the priestly office. For six days previous to reconciliation day he must eat sparingly of food. On this day he must partake of no food until the services closed, though for him it was the hardest day's

labor of the year. [Space forbids the detailed statement of sacrifices.] His first act, after the sacrifices of the morning, was to place within the vail a golden vessel of smoking incense. He then takes the blood of a bullock and sprinkles some of it upon the golden lid or mercy-seat, and seven times upon the ground before it, atoning for his own sins first, that he may properly minister for the people.

That sprinkled on the mercy-seat may have had reference to the restoration of the priesthood to the favor of God. The blood represented the life of the animal, and typified that the true penitent, in whose behalf this life was brought, might not come merely where there was fellowship with God by believing and obeying his commands, but where there should be no partition between them. In the ark was deposited "God's word," and had not the golden lid *hid it* from the gaze of all, no Jew could have lived, for they were ever violating its commands. Blood upon that lid atoned for their sins of *ignorance*. That covenant remained there for fifteen hundred years, and over that covenant or law, on the mercy-seat, God met the Jewish race in the *person of the high priest, and he met them alone*. He afterward removed the law from the ark, and put his word in the body of Christ. Christ died and bequeathed that word to God's ambassadors, the twelve Apostles. When Christ died the vail was rent, and the order of worship rearranged.

The holy of holies and the ark were removed to heaven, where God now, through Christ our High Priest, meets his people — our high priest having ordered that the ambassadors of God should carry his new covenant or

gospel into *all the world*. The lamp-stand, or gospel, or word of God, being in the holy place, the Church is to let it shine through it into all the tribes of men. The admission of the high priest behind the vail with the life of the bullock, indicates that the curtain, however beautifully adorned, should not exclude the true believer from a closer intimacy with his Creator. This high priest had first to atone for his *own* sins—our High Priest only for *our* sins.

The holy of holies having been purified from the sins of the priests, similar ceremonies were performed in behalf of the people, with the blood of a goat carefully selected for the purpose. Then the holy place was purified by sprinkling blood upon the golden altar and its horns, after which followed the cleansing of the altar of sacrifice. Now the second goat is brought to the door of the tabernacle, when the high priest places his hands upon its head, and confesses the sins of the people to God, after which it is led away into the *uninhabited* land, or land of *forgetfulness*, with the sins of the people upon it.

The two goats were intended to represent one sin-offering. One could not typify all designed to be represented. Jesus had power to "lay down his life and power to take it up again." In order to bring out the true meaning of the sacrifice, it was necessary that the act of the living should be performed after death; and as this could not be done with a single offering, two were employed. Returning to the holy of holies, the high priest removes the golden incense vessel, washes and reinvests himself with his golden vestments. The people rejoice when they hear the music of the bells, for this signifies the safety of their

leader. He sends the flesh of bullock and goat outside the camp to be burned—the fat of them only being consumed on the altar of sacrifices. The regular sacrifices of the day now being offered, he is privileged to return to the bosom of his family, from whom, for a week, he has been separated.

This day typifies our High Priest laying aside the royalty of heaven—tabernacling in the flesh—dying for our sins, and rising for our justification. His blood was typified by the goat's blood, and his "blotting out our sins" was typified by the act of the goat that carried away sins into the uninhabited land. The only way to get into the holy of holies is through the holy place. The only way to get into the Church is to sacrifice at the altar, and wash at the laver, thereby becoming a priest. The blood of Christ can not affect the sins of the sinner until he does that which entitles *his* High Priest (Christ) to tender blood to God at the mercy-seat.

When the sinner believes, repents, confesses Christ, and is baptized—*washed*—which is the last condition of pardon, he is entitled to the tender of "blood."

Prior to these steps Christ is only a Mediator; after these four steps are taken, he changes his relations and becomes a Priest the moment the sinner becomes a priest. The translation from "sinner to saint," "power of darkness" to "child of light," "sinner to priest," is when the fourth step, from a pure heart, is accomplished, and never before. Priests belong *in* the Church—our High Priest is now in the holy of holies, with his own blood mediating and officiating.

As the people anciently anxiously awaited the return

of their earthly high priest from the holy of holies, and the music of the golden bells announced his existence and heralded his approach, causing the millions whose sins had been "passed by" another year to shout their rejoicings—so when our loved High Priest returns a second time in the clouds of heaven, "without a sin-offering unto salvation," his approach will be heralded by the shouts of archangels and the trumpet of God. He will then claim his ransomed, and take them home, but take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel.

Will you rejoice when you hear him coming?

## CHAPTER VII.—BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

GEOGRAPHY and chronology—the place where, and the time when—are called “the great eyes of history.”

It is almost indispensable that the student of Bible history should have at least an outline knowledge of the lands and countries mentioned in the Bible.

Only a mere outline can be presented in the space which has been allotted to this lesson.

With Jerusalem as the center of our map, let us endeavor to trace the names and boundaries of these Bible lands.

CLASSIFICATION.—Bible lands may be classified as follows:

1. The district north and east of the Euphrates. This contains Armenia, Media, Parthia, Persia, Chaldea, Mesopotamia, and Assyria.

2. The district between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean. Here we find Arabia, Philistia, Canaan, Phœnicia, and Syria.

3. The district south of the Mediterranean. This comprises Arabia, Egypt, and Libya, with its farthest boundary about one thousand miles from Jerusalem.

4. The district north of the Mediterranean. In this district we find Spain, Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor. Spain, the extreme country named in this division, is

about nineteen hundred miles to the northwest from Jerusalem.

When we consider the history of Bible lands in connection with their geography, we find that the lands which may be properly called "the lands of the beginning," are Armenia, Chaldea, and Mesopotamia; Egypt is the land where the Hebrews were held in bondage; in Arabia Petræa they wandered for forty years; Canaan is the land of promise; the lands of Philistia, Syria, and Arabia, were the scene of the Jewish wars; into Assyria and Babylonia the children of Israel were carried captive by Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar; Media and Persia are associated with Cyrus, the lover of Daniel and the emancipator of the Jews; while the lands into which the tribes were finally dispersed were Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, and Arabia.

The countries of the Bible embraced territory nineteen hundred miles to the northwest from Jerusalem; twelve hundred miles to the southeast; one thousand miles to the southwest; and one thousand miles to the northeast.

"The land which was the residence of the chosen people, where our blessed Savior dwelt, and where the principal events recorded in the Bible took place, is known by various names. On account of its sacred associations it is called the Holy Land (Zechariah ii. 12); the pleasant land (Daniel viii. 9); the glorious land (Daniel xi. 6); the Lord's land (Hosea ix. 3); the land which the Lord swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob (Genesis i. 24); and the land of promise (Hebrews xi. 9).

"From its inhabitants at different periods, it is called

the land of Canaan (Genesis xi. 31); the land of the Hebrews (Genesis xl. 15); the land of Israel (1 Samuel xiii. 19); and Palestine, which is now familiarly applied to the whole country, though when used in the Old Testament (Exodus xv. 14; Isaiah xiv. 29; Joel iii. 4) it had its original and narrower sense of Philistia (Psalm lx. 8 , or the territory of the Philistines along the southwestern coast.

“This land was admirably adapted, by its location, for the purpose for which God, in his providence, designed it. It was shut in by great natural barriers—the Mediterranean on the west, the mountain range of Lebanon on the north, and the desert on the south and east; and the people were thus secluded from the heathen states around them. Its proximity to the seats of early civilization, and to the great empires of the old world, both gave them the advantage of the highest existing forms of worldly culture, and provided instruments for their chastisement when they transgressed. And its central position in relation to the three great continents of the eastern hemisphere, lying, as it did, upon or adjacent to the main routes of trade and travel from west to east, eminently fitted it to be the center of diffusion of the true religion, when the time had come for the gospel to be preached to every creature.”

MOUNTAINS.—The principal mountains of the Bible, with their elevation in feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea, are Mt. Ararat, seventeen thousand, three hundred and twenty-three; Lebanon, ten thousand and fifty-one; Hermon, nine thousand three hundred and seventy-six; Sinai, eight thousand five hundred and



ninety-three; Olivet, two thousand six hundred and sixty-five; Zion, two thousand five hundred and fifty; Moriah, two thousand, four hundred and forty; Carmel, eighteen hundred; Gilead, five thousand. With the exception of Ararat, in Armenia, the mountains named in the Bible are either in or around Palestine. On Mt. Ararat the ark of Noah rested while the waters of the flood were disappearing. Lebanon is the name applied to a range of mountains in the north of Palestine. "The name *Lebanon* signifies 'white,' and was applied either on account of the snow, which, during a great part of the year, covers its whole summit, or on account of the white color of its limestone cliffs and peaks." Its highest peak may be called "the white mountain," or the *Mont Blanc* of Palestine.

Hermon is on the northeastern border of Palestine. "It towers high above the ancient border-city of Dan, and the fountains of the Jordan, and is the most conspicuous and beautiful mountain in Palestine or Syria. The name *Hermon* was doubtless suggested by its appearance—'a lofty, prominent peak'—visible from afar. When the whole country is parched with the summer sun, white lines of snow streak the head of Hermon. This mountain was the great landmark of the Israelites. It was associated with their northern border almost as intimately as the sea was with the western."

Mt. Sinai is nearly in the center of the peninsula which lies like a wedge between the horns of the Red Sea. It is forever associated with the giving of the law through Moses to the children of Israel.

"The temple of Jehovah stood on Moriah, the palace

of David on Zion, and Christ was received up into heaven from the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives."

Gerizim and Ebal are "twin mountains in the heart of Palestine." The former is called the "mount of blessing," and the latter the "mount of cursing;" for "when Israel had entered the promised land, six tribes were stationed on the side of Gerizim, facing northward, to respond to the blessings written in the law, and six tribes on the side of Ebal, facing southward, to respond to the curses of the law, as they were read by Joshua in the valley between."

Mount Hor is memorable as being the place where Aaron died, fourteen hundred and fifty-one years before Christ; while Mount Nebo is equally memorable as the place where Moses, the brother of Aaron, died, one-half year later. "Whether Pisgah was the same as Nebo, or rather a range of mountains, with Nebo for one of its summits, is not yet determined."

Mount Carmel is associated with Elijah and his conflicts with the prophets of Baal. It is northwest from Jerusalem, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

SEAS AND RIVERS. - There are four seas mentioned in the Bible - the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea.

The Mediterrantan Sea was called the "Great Sea," in contrast with the other bodies of water known to the Israelites.

The Red Sea lies between Egypt and the peninsula of Sinai. The northern part of it is quite narrow, and across this God provided a way for the children of Israel to pass on dry ground when they fled from Egypt.

The Dead Sea is southeast from Jerusalem about twenty-five miles. The sea is about forty-six miles long, and at its greatest width about ten miles. The river Jordan pours its waters into this sea, as well as other smaller streams. While all the waters which empty into the Dead Sea are sweet and fresh, "the sea itself is acrid and salt." It has no apparent outlet, and the surface of its water is thirteen hundred and sixteen feet below the Mediterranean.

Its appearance during a storm is described by Lieutenant Lynch as follows: "A fresh north wind was blowing as we rounded the point. We endeavored to steer a little north of west, to make a true west course, and threw the patent log overboard to measure the distance; but the wind rose so rapidly that the boats could not keep head to wind, and we were obliged to haul the log in. The sea continued to rise with the increasing wind, which gradually freshened to a gale, and presented an agitated surface of foaming brine. The spray, evaporating as it fell, left incrustations of salt upon our clothes, our hands, and faces; and, while it conveyed a prickly sensation wherever it touched the skin, was, above all, exceedingly painful to the eyes. The boats, heavily laden, struggled sluggishly at first; but when the wind freshened in its fierceness, from the density of the water it seemed as if their bows were encountering the sledge-hammers of the Titans, instead of the opposing waves of an angry sea."

The Sea of Galilee, sometimes called "the Sea of Tiberias," and "the Lake of Gennesaret," is about "twelve miles long, and five broad, and is incased among

beautiful and verdant hills, having on the west the tableland of Galilee, and on the east the still deeper and loftier region of Bashan. The waters of the lake are clear and sweet, and at its northern extremity abound in fish."

The river Jordan is the principal river of the Holy Land. Its length, from its source to the south end of the Dead Sea, is about one hundred and sixty-two miles in a straight line; but, following the tortuous course of the river, the distance is increased from one hundred and sixty-two miles to nearly three hundred miles. The level of the Jordan, at its northern source, is seventeen hundred feet above the Mediterranean, but at the Dead Sea it is thirteen hundred feet below. No vessels have ever navigated its waters, and not a city has ever flourished on its banks. Jericho lies to the west of it, a distance of ten miles, the only place of note until we reach the Sea of Galilee. There we find the two towns of Tiberias and Capernaum. But the wonderful events which transpired along its banks invest it with an interest second to that of no river in the world.

By reading the following passages of Scripture the student will learn the principal seas and rivers of Bible lands: Numbers xxxiv. 6; Ezra iii. 7; Deuteronomy ii. 24; Exodus xxxiii. 31; Acts xxvii. 27; Exodus x. 19; Genesis xiv. 5; John xxi. 1; Numbers xxxiv. 11; Mark vi. 53; Genesis ii. 10-13; Psalm cxxxvii. 1; Genesis xl. 1; Isaiah xxiii. 3; Jeremiah ii. 18; II. Kings v. 12; Judges v. 21; Deuteronomy ii. 36; Deuteronomy ii. 37; Joshua iii. 8.

VALLEYS AND DESERTS.—The principal valleys and deserts of Bible lands are named in the following passages:

Joshua ii. 16, 17; II. Chronicles xxxv. 22; Hosea i. 5; Joshua x. 12; Joshua vii. 26; Deuteronomy xxxiv. 3; Numbers xxxii. 9; Jeremiah vii. 32; Joel iii. 2; Exodus xiii. 18-20; Exodus xv. 22; Numbers xxxiii. 8; Exodus xvi. 1; Exodus xix. 1, 2; Numbers x. 12. Let each one be located on the map.

**CITIES.**—The following Scripture passages make mention of the most important of the cities, towns and villages of Palestine. The first city mentioned in the Bible was built by Cain: Genesis iv. 17, 20; Judges i. 31; I. Kings xvii. 9; Luke iv. 26; I. Kings v. 1, 6; Acts xxi. 7; Luke iii. 1; Matthew xvi. 13; Acts xxiii. 31; Joshua xix. 46; II. Chronicles ii. 16; Ezra iii. 7; Jonah i. 3; Acts ix. 36; Acts x.; Nehemiah xi. 35; Acts ix. 32; I. Samuel vi. 17; Joshua xv. 31; Genesis xxi. 31; Joshua iv. 15; Genesis xiii. 18; Genesis xxxv. 19; I. Samuel xvii. 12; Matthew ii. 1. Jerusalem, originally called Salem: Genesis xiv. 18; II. Samuel v. 6-9; John xi. 18; I. Samuel ii. 17; Luke xxiv. 13; Judges xix. 20; Joshua ix. 17; Genesis xxviii. 11; Joshua xviii. 1; I. Samuel iv. 4; Joshua xxi. 21; John iv. 5; I. Kings xvi. 24; I. Kings xxi. 1; II. Kings xxiii. 29; I. Samuel xxviii. 4; Luke vii. 11; I. Samuel xxviii. 7; Luke iv. 16; II. Kings xiv. 25; John ii. 1; Joshua xxi. 32; Judges iv. 6; Genesis xiv. 14; Matthew xi. 21, 23; Matthew xv. 39; Mark viii. 10; John vi. 23; Luke viii. 26; I. Samuel xxxi. 10; John i. 28; Judges vii. 24; Deuteronomy xxxiv. 3; Joshua iv. 19; I. Samuel xxiv. 1; Numbers xxxiv. 4; Joshua xxi. 38; Genesis xxxii. 2; Judges xxi. 14.

Some of these cities are mentioned several times, and

in connection with some of the most interesting events of Bible history. It would be interesting to notice the present condition of Bible lands in contrast to what they once were; but the limits of our lesson will not permit it. We conclude by repeating the words of Whittier:

"I tread where the twelve in their wayfaring trod;  
I stand where they stood with the chosen of God,  
Where his blessing was heard and his lessons were taught,  
Where the blind were restored and the healing was wrought.

"Oh! here with his flock the sad wanderer came—  
These hills he toiled over in grief are the same;  
The founts where he drank by the wayside still flow,  
And the same airs are blowing which breathed on his brow!

"And, throned on her hills, sits Jerusalem yet;  
But with dust on her forehead, and chains on her feet—  
For the crown of her pride to the mocker hath gone,  
And the holy Shechinah is dark where it shone."

## CHAPTER VIII.—BIBLE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

ORIENTAL life has, as it were, been stereotyped. A knowledge of its manners and customs will, therefore, help us very much in the understanding of many passages of Scripture, and also be of great service to the interpreter. In our own country, and in many European countries, changes of such magnitude, and so radical, have taken place that hardly the faintest resemblance can be traced between ourselves and our forefathers; while "in Palestine and Arabia, and in the greater part of Western Asia, things remain much as they were, uninfluenced by the march of civilization and by the improvements in the arts and sciences that have taken place elsewhere." This singular fact has been noticed by many travelers.

The reasons of this unchangeableness are to be sought mainly in the physical peculiarities of the countries in which the Bible scenes are laid.

There are two great classes of inhabitants in eastern countries—those who dwell in tents and those who dwell in towns.

"This division has its origin in differences of occupation and means of subsistence. The agriculturist and others, whose business left them stationary, erected houses as the most durable and the most convenient abodes; the

shepherd, on the other hand, who was obliged to shift his quarters frequently, in order to find pasture for his flocks and herds, was compelled to use the tent as the only movable habitation.

"We find traces of this distinction in the earliest pages of the Bible. We read of Cain, the agriculturist, that 'he builded a city, and called the city, after the name of his son, Enoch' (Genesis iv. 17); while Jabal, the herdsman, was 'the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle' (Genesis iv. 20)."

THE TENT AND THE HOUSE.—Two different kinds of life, and two different states of society, are represented by the tent and the house.

Abraham led a pastoral life. He wandered into Canaan from the north of Mesopotamia, accompanied by his sheep and cattle; and wherever he met with suitable pasture there he "pitched his tent" for awhile, until the supply was exhausted, when "he removed and pitched his tent" elsewhere (Genesis xii. 8 and xiii. 3, 18). "Isaac pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there" (Genesis xxvi. 17). "Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents."

When the Israelites settled in the promised land the house became the ordinary abode, and the tent was reserved merely for the purposes of war.

The material of which the tent was made is not described in the Bible, but travelers say that "the covering of a tent consists of pieces of stuff made of black goat's hair, about three quarters of a yard in breadth, its length being equal to that of the tent. According to the depth of the tent, ten or more of these pieces are stitched together." In addition to the hair stuff which formed



the "curtains of the habitation," the dwellers in tents required "stakes," or pegs, to drive into the ground, and "cords" to attach the awning to the stake.

Isaiah refers to this in his prophetic address to the Church (Isaiah liv. 2): "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left." The stability of a tent depended on the pegs, or pins, driven into the earth; hence they became an apt emblem of strength and security. Reference is made to this in Isaiah xxii. 23: "I will fasten him as a nail"—*rather, as a tent-peg*—"in a sure place."

The removal of the tent is rapidly effected; all traces of its site rapidly disappear, and "the place thereof knoweth it no more." The fleeting and insecure nature of man's life is aptly illustrated by it, as Isaiah xxxviii. 12: "Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent."

Some very interesting references are made to tents in the Scriptures: Genesis xviii. 1-10; Judges iv. 18-21; Genesis iv. 20; Exodus xxvi. 14; Acts vii. 4, 5; Hebrews xi. 8-10; Numbers xxiv. 5, 6; Acts xviii. 3.

Reference to better houses is made in Chronicles xxix. 2; Amos v. 11; Genesis xi. 3; Isaiah ix. 10.

The roofs of oriental houses were almost invariably flat. The small amount of rain which falls in that part of the world renders such a construction possible, and the heat of the climate renders it convenient. See I. Samuel ix. 25; II. Samuel xi. 2; II. Samuel xvi. 22; Nehemiah viii. 16.

Any public proclamation could be conveniently made from the house-top, and hence Jesus says: "What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops."—Matthew x. 27.

The roof was an excellent place from which to make observation of what was transpiring. Isaiah xxii. 1: "What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops?"

The roof was also used for various domestic purposes, such as spreading flax, drying figs and corn, as Joshua ii. 6: "She" (Rahab) "had brought them" (the spies) "up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof."

The roof was surrounded with a railing, or battlement, to prevent people falling over; and this was considered so necessary that God commanded, Deuteronomy xxii. 8: "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."

**BEDS AND LIGHTS.**—The bed was generally nothing more than a mattress. A bedstead, in our use of the term, was very unusual. Such a thing is only once noticed in the Bible—Deuteronomy iii. 11: "Behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits (sixteen feet) was the length thereof, and four cubits (seven feet) the breadth of it."

The ordinary bed was of a movable character. It was raised slightly from the floor, and was used as well for sitting as for lying down. See I. Samuel xix. 15; Luke

v. 18-25; II. Kings i. 4; Psalm cxxxii. 3; Genesis xlix. 33; Genesis xlviii. 2; I. Samuel xxviii. 23.

The *lamp* was the only mode of producing an artificial light for domestic uses among the Hebrews. The "candle" of the Bible had nothing in common with the modern article of that name, but must be regarded as simply another name for a lamp. The ordinary lamp was of small size; and hence it was the part of the prudent not only to take the lamps, but also oil with which to supply them.—Matthew xxv. 4.

Many of the notices of the lamp, or candle, in the Bible have reference to a custom, which has always prevailed in the East, of keeping a light burning in the house throughout the whole of the night. The extinction of the light was an unlooked-for and unfortunate occurrence, and hence gave rise to expressions significant of sudden and violent destruction. See Job xxi. 17; Proverbs xx. 20; Revelation xviii. 23.

On the other hand, the kindling or maintenance of the light was an apt increase of protection, continuance, and cheerfulness. I. Kings xi. 36: "And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem." See also I. Kings xv. 4; Job xxix. 2, 3; Proverbs xiii. 9; Revelation xxii. 5.

SEPULCHERS.—These were the burial-places of the dead. They were often called "houses;" and they differed from the houses of the living far less than do our burial-places. "Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him *in his house* at Ramah."—I. Samuel xxv. 1. See also

I Kings ii. 34; Job iii. 13, 15; Job xxx. 23; Isaiah xiv. 15, 18.

The sepulchers of the Jews were of two sorts—natural and artificial. Of the first sort examples are found in Genesis xxiii. 8, 9, 19 and Joshua x. 27; of the second sort—II. Chronicles xvi. 14; Matthew xxvii. 59, 60; John xi. 38. Such burial-places were frequently on a level with the surrounding ground, and therefore a person might be said to “go into” or “come forth from” a sepulcher. See John v. xxviii. 28, 29; John xi. 43, 44; John xx. 6.

Sometimes the sepulchers were highly elevated, and this was the case with those of the rich. Hence Isaiah asks: “What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulcher here, as he that heweth him out a sepulcher on high, and that graveth a habitation for himself in a rock.”—Isaiah xxii. 16.

By the Jews all graves were regarded as unclean, and communicated legal uncleanness to any one who came in contact with them. It was usual, therefore, to make them conspicuous by painting them white. Hence our Savior’s remarks: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto *whited sepulchers*, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and all uncleanness.”—Matthew xxiii. 27. Also, Luke xi. 44; Luke vii. 12; John xi. 30.

FOOD AND CLOTHING.—The food of the Jews was mostly of a very simple nature. It consisted of bread in various forms, and preparations of corn, honey, milk, fish and vegetables. Meat was comparatively seldom eaten by any except the wealthy. Bread was of two kinds

—leavened and unleavened. When Lot entertained the angels, “he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.”—Genesis xix. 3. For other examples see Judges vi. 19; I. Samuel xxviii. 24 and Exodus xii. 34, 39.

The nature and influence of leaven, led to its being regarded as symbolic of certain ideas. Our Lord selects it as an illustration of the secret, subtle, and penetrating influence of doctrine, whether for good or for evil, as Matthew xiii. 33 and Matthew xvi. 6. It is used by Paul (I. Corinthians v. 7, 8) as a symbol of sin.

The materials of which bread was made were various, as II. Kings iv. 42; John vi. 9; I. Kings iv. 22 and Ezekiel xvi. 13.

The duty of grinding the corn devolved upon the females of the family, and upon the female slaves, where slaves were kept. Hence the deep degradation implied in the statement: “They took the young men to grind.”—Lamentations v. 13.

The general practice is expressed, Matthew xxiv. 41: “Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” The menial nature of the service is vividly expressed in the following passages: “All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is *behind the mill*.”—Exodus xi. 5. “Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. *Take the millstones, and grind meal.*”—Isaiah xlvii. 1, 2.

Bread was seldom eaten by itself. Something was required to give a relish to it. See Ruth ii. 14; John xiii. 26 and John xxi. 9.

Milk is a substantial article of diet in the East; and from the great importance of it, it became a token of richness in a country. Palestine is described as "a land that floweth with milk and honey" (Joshua v. 6); and in Joel iii. 18 it is predicted: "In that day \* \* \* the hills shall flow with milk."

The leathern bottles, for holding milk and water, are frequently mentioned: Genesis xxi. 14 and Judges iv. 19.

The bottles are generally made of goat-skin, but occasionally of camel or ox-skin, which is duly prepared by tanning. The goat-skin is used whole, being drawn off the body of the animal after cutting off its head and feet; the openings thus made being afterward sewed up. "In the case of other animals, the sides are sewed together and the joinings well smeared with grease. Such bottles become dried by the smoke of an Arab tent; or, when they have been in long use, are liable to crack and become worthless. Hence the Psalmist, to express his exhausted condition under suffering compares himself to a 'bottle in the smoke.'—Psalm cxix. 83" If any fermentation were produced by the liquor contained in them they would burst. Hence Mark ii. 22: "No man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles." The condition of an old bottle is described in Joshua ix. 4 as "*old, and rent, and bound up.*"

The general character of oriental dress has been the

same in all ages—loose, flowing robes, of varying thickness, so as to suit the variations of an eastern climate, easily put on and off, and without the same amount of distinction between the sexes as prevails among ourselves.

The desire for clothing for the body was one of the first indications that sin had “entered into the world.” Genesis iii. 7: “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”

For articles and customs of dress the following Scripture passages may be read: Genesis iii. 21; Genesis xli. 42; Luke xvi. 19; Exodus ix. 31; Judges viii. 26; Genesis xxxvii. 3, 4; Psalm xlv. 13, 14; Deuteronomy xxiv. 13; Ruth iii. 15; Exodus xii. 34; Luke vi. 29; John xix. 23; Luke xv. 22; Proverbs xxxi. 13, 22; Isaiah v. 27; I. Peter i. 13; Isaiah iii. 18–23; I. Corinthians xi. 15; I. Peter iii. 3; I. Timothy, ii. 9; Psalm lxxv. 5; II. Kings ix. 30; Job i. 20; II. Samuel xiv. 25, 26; Esther iii. 10; Daniel vi. 17; Isaiah iii. 18; Matthew xxvi. 65; Acts xiv. 14; Genesis xlv. 22; Psalm xlv. 8.

The ordinary robes of the Jew were two, which are distinguished in our Bible as the “coat” and “cloak.” The “coat” was really an under-garment, resembling in shape our shirt. It fitted close to the body, reached to the knee, and was furnished with sleeves. A person clothed in the “coat” or tunic alone, was said to be “stripped,” or “naked.” See I. Samuel xix. 24; Isaiah xx. 2 and John xxi. 7.

The “coat” was confined at the waist by a girdle, made sometimes of leather, as in the cases of Elijah and John the Baptist, of whom it is said that he had “a leathern

girdle about his loins" (II. Kings i. 8 and Matthew iii. 4); and sometimes of linen, as Jeremiah xiii. 1.

Over the coat was worn the "cloak," which consisted simply of a quadrangular piece of thick stuff. It might be worn in various ways, either over the two shoulders like a shawl, or over one shoulder and across the breast, like a Scotch plaid. The four corners were adorned with a fringe or tassel, attached to it by a blue riband, according to the command of God in Numbers xv. 38, 39.

The "cloak" was not only used as a garment, but was useful for carrying any articles. See Exodus xii. 34; Judges viii. 25; II. Kings iv. 39; Haggai ii. 12; Luke vi. 38. It was also used as a covering at night; and it was ordered in the law (Exodus xxii. 26, 27). And, in reference to this, our Savior says: "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."—Matthew v. 40."

It would be interesting to notice the "social usages" of the East—education, marriage ceremonies, social intercourse, hospitality, amusements, funeral rites, agriculture methods of traveling, etc., etc.; but we are unable to do so in the space afforded us. We must, therefore, be content to close our lesson here.



## PART II.

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### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

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#### I.—ITS PLACE AND PURPOSE.

THE Sunday-school is now one of the most important agencies for the exertion of the activities of the Church of Christ.

The principle upon which it is based is divine, not human. In one form or another it has existed since, and during, and even before, the Apostolic age.

“The good philanthropists of the last century, in digging that they might build a human fabric, laid bare an ancient and divine foundation. Let us rear our superstructure upon this, rather than upon their narrow basis, and after their scantier measurements.”

It would hardly be expected that the form which it took in the early days of the Church would be reproduced now. No attempt, therefore, is made to show the exact resemblance of the modern Sunday-school to the Church-school of the Apostolic age. All that we desire to affirm is that in principle and design they are the same.

The Sunday-school may be defined to be that department of the Church of Christ in which the word of God is taught for the purpose of bringing souls to Christ, that they may come into Christ, to be built up in Christ, that

finally they may be with Christ. It is the primary grade of the school of Christ. It is for the teaching, rather than the preaching, of the gospel. "It involves the processes of teaching, of questioning, of personal application, of hand-to-hand effort in the development of thought and of self-activity. It is in fulfillment of the divine command, 'Go, preach.' It is in imitation of the divine example of Him who spake as never man spake—the Great Teacher; who used illustrations, and asked questions, and made direct, personal application; who taught individuals and small groups, and elicited from his pupils remarks, opinions, thoughts, questions, etc., of their own. It is the Church becoming now what all the followers of Christ were at the beginning—disciples."

In its relation to other agencies for the acquisition of Bible knowledge, and growth in grace, it is proper to say here that the Sunday-school is not a make-shift, substituted for home instruction, any more than the common school of civilized countries is a substitute for the teaching the savage gives his child in his hut. It is not a substitute for preaching—it can not be. It is not a substitute for the other religious meetings of the Church. No Christian is to be excused from prayer-meeting, or preaching service, or social meeting of the Church, simply because he has attended the session of the Sunday-school. It is not a school for little children only, but for adults and children, both from the Church and from the world.

It is a meeting and a school, the grand purpose of which is to teach the word of God; to train the mind and heart to faith and obedience to Christ; and to culture and discipline the whole nation for the struggles and joys

of a life of faith in Christ. It ought to have the hearty sympathy of the home, the willing aid of the whole Church, and to supplement in these modern days the teaching of the secular schools.

## II — ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT.

Before there can be efficient management there must be the primary act of organization. To organize is to arrange or constitute in parts, each having a special function, act, office, or relation.

There can be no social power without organization. If individuals wish to act together for a common end, they must organize. Without organization individual power is wasted, collisions are likely to occur, and no good result can be accomplished. With it individual actions are united and made capable of great results.

The power of combined or organized effort is stated in such sentences as these in the Bible: "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight," and, "How should *one* chase a thousand, and *two* put ten thousand to flight, except \* \* \* the Lord had shut them up."

For every object they desire to accomplish by united action, people are organized. Hence we find that, to enable them to attain to the highest degree of personal spiritual power, and to promote the interests of the Church of Christ, the divine wisdom has ordained that the disciples be organized into congregations.

In every organization there are three things essential:

1. A number of persons who desire to join themselves together to achieve a specified result.

2. A system of rules by which each person is to be guided.

3. Government, or officers to enforce the rules.

The character of the organization will, of course, be varied, according to the size and circumstances of the school. Let it be understood, however, that perfect organization is not an obstacle to free and natural movement in its management.

There should be a certain amount of flexibility in the organization, and special provisions made for all occasional exercises which it may be desirable to introduce.

The officers of a Sunday-school are in general:

1. A Superintendent, and as many assistants as the needs of the school require.

2. A Secretary, with assistants, if necessary.

3. A Treasurer.

4. Teachers.

5. A Librarian.

Other persons can be selected to take charge of matters of special interest or importance, as the occasion requires. These should be selected by the superintendent, aided by the counsel of his teachers.

No perfect organization can be had without giving attention to the general principles of which we have spoken.

**MANAGEMENT.**—The superintendent is the center of control and authority in the Sunday-school. He is the executive officer, responsible to the school and to the Church for the administration of the rules which have been adopted.

The Sunday-school ought to be emphatically a church-school, in which the entire membership of the church

has an interest—not in theory only, but also in fact. Hence the superintendent should be chosen by the church. When he has been selected he should have the privilege of the selection of the secretary, librarian, chorister, and teachers. In doing this work he should call to his assistance the best judgment of the church. As responsibility ought to rest somewhere, we would have the secretary, librarian, choristers, and teachers responsible to the superintendent; and the superintendent responsible to the church.

The *duties* of the superintendent may be briefly stated. He is to work for the interest of the church that has called him to his position; he is to govern, to watch over, direct, and lead the persons committed to his care; he is to govern the school with reference to its one great object—Bible study for spiritual edification. And, as the majority of the persons committed to his care are young, he is to govern in the interest of the best and purest 'Christian homes which are there represented, and which it is the design of the Sunday-school to establish where they do not exist.

QUALIFICATIONS.—To guide in the selection of this most important officer, some of the main qualifications which he ought to possess are enumerated.

To a great degree the superintendent is the school. Scholars and teachers, of course, are needed in making a school; but scholars and teachers are of little avail without a superintending head. A number of people, old or young, brought together without any organic center of action, do not constitute a school. Chemistry gives us a good illustration of this idea. Two or three different

kinds of materials, put into a vessel, make simply a confused mixture; but add another ingredient, of exactly the right kind, and the confused mass becomes at once organic. If the superintendent is the right sort of a man, the school will flourish despite all adverse influences. If the superintendent is incapable, or faithless, the school will languish, in spite of the best of teachers and the most favorable circumstances.

We have expressed the case strongly, that the matter may come with emphasis to those concerned. His prominent qualifications should be:

1. He should possess unmistakable Christian integrity and piety.

2. He must be a man of *common sense*—"sanctified common sense."

3. He must have *enthusiasm* in his work; he must delight in it. While necessity is laid upon him, still he should render the service to which he is called, from the heart.

4. He must have "governing tact," or executive ability. He must have a quick eye and a steady hand; seeing defects, he must be able to correct them; having a correct understanding of what is to be done, he must be able promptly and persistently to do it—in other words, he must be a strong, wise, considerate, and sympathetic governor.

5. He must be a devoted and diligent student of the Bible, "apt to teach," and able to quicken and increase the teaching power of his teachers. He should *not* be fussy, fretful, noisy, or too great a talker. With such a superintendent, as we have described, success is assured.

Let no church be discouraged by this high ideal. There are more of this class of men in every community than we imagine, but they have not been called out; growthful men, who only are waiting to enter the "effectual door."

### III.—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

THE OFFICE.—Teachers of the Word were a part of the early Church (I. Corinthians xii. 28). In the modern church-school the main work is carried on by the teacher.

No one will do his best in anything unless he profoundly believes in his work. He who has a true impression of the unutterable greatness of divine things, has the first and grandest qualification of a teacher. Without this it will be useless to make the attempt to inspire him with any very deep love for the work.

1. The Sunday-school teacher is the interpreter of the Bible to his class. He is to open to their minds the character and contents of that Sacred Volume whose authority they must be taught to reverence, and whose treasures of truth they should learn to consult. If the teacher's work is well done, the Bible will become to them, in its main features, a familiar book.

He is not to use imaginative power and final meanings which the writer never meant, and which might startle his class by their originality.

The Well of Truth is deep, and he may never get to the bottom of the facts actually in the text. But he must not, under any circumstances, put anything into the well—only draw out what is already there.

2. For the time being he is to be the counselor and adviser of his class in spiritual things.

It will often happen that members of his class will tell their difficulties of conscience, their trials of mind, and their religious feelings, more freely to their Sunday-school teacher than to their own parents; and, if he has a conscientious regard for the office he holds, he can be their wisest and calmest counselor.

3. Again—the true teacher is the religious educator of his class. He is to make the effort to steadily increase their scriptural knowledge, and to develop their spiritual intelligence, so that their powers of perception, comparison, and reasoning, in spiritual things, will ripen into a healthy and vigorous spiritual life.

4. Besides this, the teacher, to a certain extent, is a preacher to his class—not in the sense of formal discourse, but by lessons and familiar talks, suited to the age and mental condition of the young hearers.

People need not only to be taught what to do, but to be roused to action as well. Hence, while he prepares the instruction for the mind, directs as to what the memory should grasp, and makes the conscience quicken to its duty, he should rouse the heart to an active response.

THE POWER.—It has been wisely said, that nothing can be mean or unimportant which helps to shape a soul for its eternal destinies. This the Sunday-school teacher does. In all the length of existence there are no houses so full of consequence as those which lie at the beginning —“in the one alone childhood, which each soul is permitted to enjoy.”



It is impossible to overestimate the importance and power of early impressions.

“Scratch the green rind, and the scarred oak  
Will tell of this for centuries to come.”

The material upon which the teacher works is not wax, or marble, or granite, but the heart of a child. Touch that heart and your finger-prints will be found upon him ages hence. This is no vision—it is the simple truth.

The teacher has to labor with great and eternal thoughts—the thoughts of God in their relation to man. The deepest impressions received in life are those imparted to the sensitive and tenacious mind of childhood. If these impressions are of a proper character, there will ever be a reaching after truth and right, with the humble trust and earnest docility of childhood; and there will remain forever on the countenance of age the sweetest charm of youth.

The *soul* and the *truth* were made for each other, as the sunshine and the seed for soil. In bringing these together, in the proper order and manner, lies the secret of the teacher's influence over the child.

The truth which he teaches is the revelation of God to man. It is a divine message, and carries in itself the authority of its eternal Author; it is the grand instrument of the world's deliverance and salvation. The teacher should rest upon the Word as the warrior relies upon his well-tried weapon. “If religious thought and truth have been, as history shows, the mightiest forces in shaping the character and conditions of society, then the diffusion of religious ideas among the young is one of the

most momentous of the agencies which men can employ to elevate and purify society, and save liberty and good government to nations. And, as God's kingdom, that last outcome of history, is to be the triumph of the religious and eternal over the merely secular and material, every added religious thought and thinker increases the growing majorities whose elective choice shall make God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

We would not raise the standard of the teacher so high that none will attempt to reach it; and yet, with the fact before us that

"There are treasures of infinite price to be won,  
There are treasures of infinite price to be lost,"

We can not easily place the standard too high; and to steer by the unvarying stars is far better than to walk by the glow-worm's light, even if you can touch the one and should never reach the other.

The world has its plaudits and its honors for conquerors and kings, expositors of laws, successful artists, popular poets, and even skillful potters; but has no honors or praise for him who has given his life to restore the golden days of which poets sing, and has sought to fashion immortal minds, after the image of the one perfect Man.

But the Sunday-school teacher needs no praise or honor from them, for his image is enshrined in the hearts of those whom he taught the way to paradise, and their lives shall be his everlasting memorial. If these considerations will not persuade him to his work, then one risen from the dead could not persuade him.

## IV.—HOW TO STUDY THE LESSON.

It is impossible to study a Bible lesson too thoroughly. And, as the time that can be devoted to study by the average teacher is necessarily brief, whatever can be furnished him, which will not impair his own efforts, is clear gain to him.

Teaching has a threefold purpose.

1. It is to inform as to facts, so that a thorough understanding of the meaning of the lesson may be reached.

2. To convince as to truths, or that the practical bearing of the lesson may be ascertained.

3. To persuade as to duties.

This threefold purpose is to reach the mind, the memory, the conscience, the heart. We study the lesson to gain this end.

PREPARATION.—In preparing to study a lesson it is necessary that the teacher should himself have—

1. A truth-loving spirit. Truth will not unveil her beauties to the insincere or undevout. In the parable of the sower (Matthew xiii.), the only soil that profitably receives the seed of the kingdom is the “good and honest heart.” “Because they received not the love of the truth” (II. Thessalonians ii. 10)—they perished.

2. Earnestness. “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.”—Proverbs ii. 1-5.

3. Perseverance and Thoroughness. The butterfly, gayly tipping the flowers and rapidly flitting from flower to flower, may get enough for its brief and slender life; but the more homely bee, that works into the depths of the flower's sweetness, and exhausts its treasures, comes home richly laden with stores for future needs. When the Apostle James speaks of "looking into the perfect law of liberty," it is not a casual or indifferent glance of which he speaks. His language implies a *stooping down* to look in—an eager, steadfast, penetrating gaze, a continuance in study. "Blessed is the man," says Wisdom, "that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."—Proverbs viii. 34.

THE STUDY.—When the mind and heart are prepared for study, the great, indispensable prerequisite for studying the Bible is—a BIBLE, the very best edition you are able to own. Other helps, such as a Concordance, Bible dictionary, maps, etc., are desirable, but are not so absolutely necessary.

If the study is a book of the Bible, the following course is recommended:

1. External Particulars. The book; its name, date, author, style, and important features.

2. Internal Particulars.

1. When? Chronology, and the connection of its parts.

2. Where? Places—their peculiarities, relations, and associations.

3. Who? Persons, characters, classes, names, titles, position, and histories.

4. What? Words, terms, figures, things, actions, incidents, errors, truths.
5. Why? Causes, motives, designs.
6. Whence? Things implied, inferred, suggested, or produced.

If instead of a book a single verse, paragraph, or lesson is the subject for study, the following method can be pursued :

1. Read the text carefully and thoughtfully. Then read the connection or context.

2. Inquire by whom it was written and to whom it was addressed; the time, place, and circumstances of the writing. Why was it written? This inquiry will often throw much light on the subject.

3. Ascertain all that you can concerning the persons, places, and even its mention in the lesson. A good Bible dictionary will be of great value here. Ancient customs and usages were very different from those of our time. This fact known will explain many otherwise difficult passages.

4. Study parallel passages, wherein the same truths are taught, or else some leading words are used.

Avoid any fanciful interpretations or far-fetched meanings. When you have exhausted your own efforts, then you may look into commentaries and gain whatever advantage you can from them.

The study and unyielding purpose of the teacher must be to get the exact meaning of the text—the truth, no more, no less.

PLAN OF TEACHING.—When the lesson has been studied until its facts and truths are clearly in the mind,

there is another matter which ought to be matured before the teacher goes before his class. This is to decide upon a plan by which it may be presented to the class.

1. Every lesson has a leading thought. Decide what that is, and either express it in the exact words of Scripture, or in your own carefully chosen language. Express in Scripture language if possible.

2. Select the truths to enforce it. These may be found in the lesson, or context, or parallel passages.

3. Mark the points which need explanation, proof, or illustration, and prepare such explanations, proofs, and illustrations, that the preparation may be complete. Seek fitting illustrations from nature, from your own experience, from reading, anywhere.

4. Arrange all your material so as to interest, instruct, and impress.

5. And, finally, go with a prayerful spirit to your class, and in that spirit teach.

## V.—HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON.

PRINCIPLES.—There are some foundation principles upon which all true and successful teaching is based. Methods must always vary with circumstances, and be adapted to the diverse needs of teacher and taught; but the principles which underlie all methods are ever the same.

I. The first grand principle, without which no teacher can be successful, is *Faith*—faith in himself that he has ability to impart instruction; faith in God; faith in the word of God; and faith in the children, or the class

II. The second grand foundation principle is *Love*—

love for himself. Such a love for himself as that he would scorn to do anything wrong for any reason ; love for God ; love for the word of God ; and love for the children.

Besides these, there are others of scarcely less practical importance.

1. A knowledge of the art of teaching, or the best method of communicating instruction. There are some teachers who are called natural teachers, and who succeed without hardly knowing why. Their intuitions have enabled them to learn the art without study. They do not succeed because they neglect rules, but because their quick perception has taught them the very sum and substance of those rules.

2. A thorough understanding of the mental and moral characteristics of children ; and, especially, of those whom he has to instruct. He must have a general knowledge of human nature, but a special knowledge of his own pupils. No two scholars are exactly alike in temper, moral perception, or intelligence ; hence the necessity of giving heed to this principle.

3. Clearness of expression. This will usually follow a clear conception of the truth to be taught, and the meaning of words. The rule of the Roman orator was—To speak so plainly that all could understand him, and none could misunderstand him. In the choice of words, let such words be employed as clearly convey the thought. Call a spade, a spade, and not “an oblong implement of manual industry.” Call net-work, net-work, and not something “reticulated and decussated, with equal interstitial vacuities between the intersections.” Call home, home,

rather than a place of residence. "Never use a hard word where an easier one will answer the purpose." We should study the language in which our people think and talk.

4. Accuracy in the use of language. Language is not a perfect medium of thought. It is frequently difficult to make adults understand us; the difficulty is much more apparent in our intercourse with children. "The language of the Bible is often highly figurative, and our ideas of God, of infinitude and eternity, are only imperfectly conceived through types, metaphors, analogies, and adaptatives of thought and language to our limited capacities."

METHODS.—After principles come methods, which are the practical application of those principles. Having prepared himself for study, the teacher is now ready to transmit the ideas and thoughts which he has received to the minds of others. How shall he do it?

1. Secure the attention of each pupil in the class. Without attention it is impossible to teach. When attention ceases, instruction ends. How to win attention will be discussed at length in another place; but here we simply wish to say that there can be no teaching unless the pupil's mind actively co-operates with the mind of the teacher. It never can do this unless it gives attention.

2. Review briefly the preceding lesson. This will serve to awaken the interest of the class in the immediate lesson. A brief and animated review of the lesson already taught will do more toward fixing it in the memory than the half-hour's teaching. Detached, isolated knowledge, like single, separate links in a chain, is of little use, and



is usually soon forgotten; but when it is joined to what is already known, and to what is afterward acquired, it becomes a connected chain of ever-increasing strength and utility. Besides, recalling what has gone before, often throws essential light upon what is now to be studied. Frequent and regular reviews are necessary to the best success in teaching.

3. Examine the regular lesson according to the method you have already decided to be the best for your class. This will give each pupil a chance to participate, and individualize the teaching, and also develop what the pupils have done and what they already know about the lesson. No attempt to communicate the ideas of the teacher should be made till this is thoroughly done. The mistakes of the pupil may be corrected when they appear, but every pupil should be permitted to show what he knows before knowledge is thrust upon him. In this way his self-respect is preserved and his ambition stimulated, toward independent study and thought.

4. Supplement the knowledge of the pupils by the more extended knowledge of the teacher. Sometimes this can be done best by questions—direct, suggestive, general, or personal questions. Sometimes by a brief and vivid narrative. Sometimes by illustrations carefully chosen, obvious, and true. Sometimes by direct speech, in which the teacher's reverence for the Bible, appreciation of its truth, sympathy with Christ, dependence upon God, and wise and happy relations with his scholars, will leave an impression never to be lost.

5. Apply the truths of the lesson, so far as they are applicable, to the individual heart and conscience of the

class. Other things being equal, the teacher who makes the most direct and personal application of the truths of the lesson will have the greatest influence over his class. A lesson is of no great value to a scholar unless it *sticks* to him, or is twisted into his nature. To impart knowledge is only a part of the teacher's work. That is necessary, but to get it back again as by a response or rebound from the pupil's own conscience and heart is the measure of his success. It is vastly better for the child to show him how to think, and then see that he does it, than to do his thinking for him. In the one case he may be filled with knowledge, but in the other he has that knowledge which to him is power.

MISTAKES —Notwithstanding their intentions, teachers are liable to make mistakes in their teaching. To guard them as far as suggestions can do it, attention is directed to some errors which should be avoided.

1. Attempting to teach without the most careful and prayerful preparation. No teacher has the right to come before his class with undigested material, or unmeditated thought, or in a light and frivolous spirit.

2. Taking lesson notes into the class. Study them as carefully as you can at home, and then leave them there. The teacher should be more than a parrot.

3. The routine use of printed questions. These are designed to be suggestive of what is in the lesson, and helpful in its preparation, but *not* to be slavishly followed. Learn to frame your own questions.

4. Taking things for granted. Take nothing for granted. Test the knowledge of the pupil by repeated questions, and be sure that he clearly sees what is taught.

5. The failure to memorize the Scriptures on the part of teachers and scholars. No one can compute the loss to a person who has not "hid the word in his heart."

6. The failure to cultivate the art of communicating knowledge.

7. Failure to commend and encourage pupils when they do well. A word of kind recognition in this direction will sometimes turn the entire current of a life.

8. If you really have love and interest in your class do not fail to express it.

9. Be patient, polite, and affectionate in word and manner. It is a mistake not to be so.

10. The too common neglect to make the direct personal application of spiritual truth.

With the principles of teaching clearly in the mind; with the methods of teaching well mastered; with these errors avoided; and with a heart and mind wholly consecrated to Christ, there can be no failure. "The full force of teaching and example will go one way."

## VI.—HOW TO WIN AND HOLD ATTENTION.

Nothing is more essential to success in study or teaching than attention.

A person may have other elements of successful teaching in a large degree, but if this one is lacking his power is greatly limited. Attention is largely the creature, or result of habit, and will. It is difficult for even adults to give strict and undivided attention to a question; it is more difficult for children.

DEFINITION.—Attention is the voluntary fixing of the

mind upon a subject, an object, or an idea about which we desire to learn more.

The three prerequisites of successful teaching, so far as attention is concerned, are—

1. Power in the teacher to fix his own mind upon the subject to be taught.

2. Power to arrest the attention of his pupils, and to direct them to himself as their teacher.

3. Power to transfer the attention of his pupils from himself to the subject in hand.

The attention which the teacher secures on the part of his pupils must be a voluntary attention in order to be useful. It must be such an attention as will inquire after more, and never be satisfied until its questions are answered. Such a voluntary and inquiring attention will generally be a persistent attention. It will hold on to the teacher in the class; and be sorry that the time for study has passed so soon; and it will continue to think upon what has been taught.

HOW TO WIN IT.—There are conditions upon which success is based. Much depends upon the place of meeting, good ventilation, bodily comfort, protection against interruption during the exercises of the class.

On the part of the pupil there must be a personal regard for the teacher, either for his personal, moral worth, or for his recognized ability to instruct, or both; and some preparation made in advance of the recitation. The teacher must be the master of his subject—fully prepared, so that his eye may be free to watch every movement of his class. He must have more knowledge of the subject than is necessary to present in the single lesson. In this

way he will be ready for any questions which may be asked of him. He must have enthusiasm for his work, a glowing eye, a delight in his work, all indicative of the fire which burns in his own heart.

There is mighty energy in a positive and vigorous will. The teacher's will-power must be exercised before his class. It is a decided help in winning attention. His instructions must be adapted to the conditions, tastes, and needs of the pupils. The language which is most familiar to them must be the language he speaks, and his ability to move their hearts will depend upon his knowing in what they most delight. His sympathies for them must be warm and tender. Nothing attracts like the gentle courtesies which we render to those who look upon us as leaders of their thought, and as main-springs to their moral and spiritual activities.

METHODS.—There are various methods which may be employed for winning the attention.

1. The manner in which a lesson is read. The elliptical plan is a good one.

2. The analytical plan of studying a lesson, calling for the persons, places, dates, doings, doctrines, duties, is very good; because it gives every one something to do.

3. The use of illustrations—*anecdotes and pictures.*

The following incident will show the value of a pictorial illustration. A young teacher was placed in charge of a large class of undisciplined mission boys. They were bright and intelligent, but wild and thoughtless, and somewhat demoralized by unfortunate efforts at teaching. The new teacher found it difficult to hold them even for a moment. On a certain Sunday the lesson chanced to be

"Moses' Choice" Its leading thought was embodied in these words: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." The note-book was taken out and the teacher sketched quickly, yet roughly, a pair of scales. Moses was thus represented as balancing the matter in his mind. He put in the one scale riches, honor, position—maybe a kingship, all that a son of royalty in that proud empire could inherit, or a Pharaoh could bestow; in the other, poverty, oppression, toil, perhaps continual bondage, with the favor of God and the consciousness of rectitude. The last was shown in Moses' estimation to far outweigh the other. It was a simple device, but it proved successful.

4. By exciting curiosity. Set the pupils to wondering what this or that may teach.

This was illustrated by a celebrated political orator whom we once heard. The audience was in a large hall in the second story of a high block of buildings. The orator began as follows: "If a competent civil engineer, in whom you all had confidence, should stand on the platform where I stand to-night, and declare to you that this building was in danger of falling, and then proceed to give the reasons for his declarations, there is not a man, woman or child here who would not give the most earnest attention to his words." The result was just what was intended; curiosity was excited to know how that statement could have anything to do with a political discourse; the attention was won and held until the close.

TO HOLD ATTENTION.—It is one thing to gain the attention, but it is another thing to hold it when once it is gained. This must be done by being able to sustain the

interest already excited. Real and continued interest must have some substantial basis. If the teacher would interest his class he must be thoroughly interested himself. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm; energy inspires energy; like produces like the world over.

We have given adaptation as one of the conditions of success. It will be seen that if the lesson is narrative that the story must be taken up with more or less of detail. The features of beauty and interest must be brought out in a vivid and graphic manner. The pupils should be called upon to turn to other parallel or analogous narratives, and the points of difference or resemblance pointed out. If the lesson is historical, another method of treatment will be demanded. If geographical, then by the use of map and diagram the pupil's interest will go on unflagging until the close. Recapitulate and review frequently, and, especially, when the classes are composed of young scholars. It is an inspiration to a child to grasp clearly a new idea. He feels as if he were of some consequence, and he reaches out after the reward which follows victory.

If the principles and methods which we have suggested are thoroughly mastered by the teacher, and if his own heart is filled with an enthusiasm for his work, he can not fail to reach a high standard of success.

## VII.—ILLUSTRATION AND QUESTIONING.

**ILLUSTRATION.**—It is a question whether there can be any really effective teaching without illustration. Ordinary minds, at least, are not interested in the general or abstract forms of truth; but they are usually delighted

with the concrete or particular form. The mind delights in analogies; hence the importance of the use of object, pictorial, and illustrative teaching. The object method appeals to the eye, and consists in presenting to the eye any object, picture, or map, which will aid the pupil in the understanding of the subject presented. "The eye—the king of senses—remembers." By *seeing* and *hearing* we understand, and remember better than by simply hearing. By the power of association, the object recalls to the mind the lesson taught.

Objects and pictures should be correct, and the subject of instruction should never be lost sight of by their multitude. It is to illustrate the lesson—bring it out more clearly—and not to smother it, that objects and pictures are used.

The word-method appeals principally to the imagination, and consists—

1. In the description of Bible scenes and events, in a manner so graphic and life-like as to present to the mental vision a clearly outlined picture of the circumstance or narrative under consideration.

2. In the illustration of abstract truths, by means of mental images or pictures—such as anecdotes, historical facts, parables, etc., for the purpose of imparting correct knowledge and leaving vivid impressions.

Perhaps there is no better analysis of the object of illustrations than the following:

1. *Decorative*.—They render truth more attractive in appearance, and thus enable the teacher to gain the attention of the scholar—the first thing necessary in teaching.

2. *Illuminating*.—They make the subject more clear,



and give the scholar a better understanding of the truths taught.

3. *Permanency*.—They are an aid to the memory, and leave the impression of the truth more permanently fixed in the mind.

In the selection of illustrations the teacher should be careful to ascertain their absolute fidelity to the truth to be taught. Illustrations should never tell lies. They should never be used in the class—except for illustrative purposes—never for the sake of telling stories; nor simply because they are beautiful stories. They are to be used as aids in explaining and impressing the truth, and never as substitutes for it.

There is no better book than the Bible to study as a model and example, as well as authority, for illustrative teaching.

Collect illustrations from reading, from nature, art, science—everywhere and anywhere--and have a scrap and note book in which to preserve them for future use. The power to illustrate well, like every other power, grows by exercise. As the habit of finding illustrations is persevered in they will occur more and more readily, until the attentive eye and the believing heart will find them everywhere.

QUESTIONING.—It is no mean acquirement to be able to question skillfully. In the long catalogue of things acquired there is hardly one that should be set higher. Instruction may be given without its use; but, to verify the results of instruction, there is no other way than to resort to its aid. It is said of Dr. Archibald Alexander, of Princeton, that his prodigious influence on the Pres-

byterian Church in the United States was not due so much to his lectures in the theological seminary, nor to his published theological works, but to his wonderful power as a catechist.

Questions have four principal uses.

1. To gain attention by ascertaining what the pupil knows. Under this head no question should be asked which can be answered by yes or no.

2. To give instruction. The teacher, who would question his class so as to impart the greatest amount of instruction, must have his subject well studied, and have it thoroughly in hand. Such questions are of a suggestive character—they suggest rather than tell what is in the lesson. Enough must be told in the question to bring the subject within the reach of the pupil. “But the perfection of such questioning is attained when nothing is told which the pupil can discover for himself. What one tells him is charity, what he gains for himself is a conquest.”

3. To be certain that the instruction rendered is correctly understood. An old maxim for teachers is: “Never give a piece of information without asking for it again.” The third use of the question is to get back again what you have given. This is really a combination of the two preceding ones. It serves to test the fact as to whether the original knowledge of the child, or the knowledge which he had when he began to recite the lesson, has been clearly added to the instruction which the teacher has given. Questions like these are used in reviews, in which we call back, in the pupil’s own language, what has been learned, and recapitulate the whole.

4. To confirm and make permanent the knowledge acquired. Objections may be made to what the pupil has given as his knowledge of the subject, and he be required to give the reason for his answers.

It will suggest itself, however, to a wise teacher that he should be careful, in presenting this class of questions, not to go beyond the power of the child to answer; unless, as in the questions of the second class, the answer is suggested in the question.

Socrates had the reputation of being a very great teacher; yet he never lectured nor preached, but he used questions with tremendous effect. It is said of him that he believed that the great impediment of true knowledge was the possession of fancied or unreal knowledge; and that the first business of a philosopher was, not to teach, but to prepare the mind of the pupil for the reception of the truth by proving to him his own ignorance. This he did by skillful questioning. In the use of this most valuable method of teaching, success has not been wholly gained until the scholars are able and willing to ask questions as well as ready to answer them.

When this end is reached the bond of union between the teacher and pupils is complete, and they become mutual helpers in seeking after truth.

### VIII.—THE BLACKBOARD.

The years are not many since the blackboard was first used in the Sunday-school; but lately it has greatly extended. Its value is not only appreciated by superintendents, but also by teachers and preachers. Some of

the most effective preachers we know make use of it constantly in their preaching.

The development of this form of presenting lessons is not due to any one person, but principally to its intrinsic merits.

At first the blackboard was used to delineate the boundaries of countries, the course of rivers, and other topographical features of the lesson; then for memoranda of important points in the lesson; until it has now become one of the most prominent and effective instruments in the Sunday-school work. It is true that there are objections to its use. These objections come principally from two classes of persons, viz:

1. Those who object to everything in the Sunday-school, and even to the school itself. It would not be expected that they would find no fault.

2. But there is another class of intelligent, progressive, and earnest Sunday-school workers, who, from some unfortunate experience with it, have come to regard the blackboard with suspicion, if not with absolute contempt.

Now, it is quite possible to misuse and abuse any good thing; but it does not follow that it should not, therefore, be used at all.

It would be a sin to charge the unoffending blackboard with all the astonishing "exercises" which have been chalked upon its surface. A prominent trouble with blackboard exercises is that the operator tries to make a great many points, instead of concentrating his labor, and the attention of his auditors and spectators, on one or two. Some try to put on the blackboard all that they know about the subject they are trying to explain.

"This confuses the hearers, crowds the blackboard, and wastes time, patience, and *chalk*."

So far as a lesson is concerned the blackboard can be used—

- 1 To arrest the attention.
2. To concentrate on leading ideas.
3. To impress truth—historic and geographical.
4. To give a topical or elliptical outline of the lesson.
5. And for the purposes of review, special or general.

It may also be used in making announcements, and in eliciting answers from the school.

By its use the attention of the whole school may be called, at any time, to one subject. The attention secured by the blackboard is more intense, and may be held for a longer time, than without it. It thus aids the memory and makes the instructions more lasting.

If any of our readers desire to perfect themselves in the art of using the blackboard, or desire the teaching of an accomplished artist, we know of nothing better than "The Blackboard in the Sunday School," by Frank Beard, Esq. It can be ordered of any bookseller.

### IX.—THE LIBRARY.

The methods adopted for the management of the library are as numerous almost as the schools, and there is no method that I ever heard of that does not involve some practical difficulties. It is very much like getting married—every one has his choice.

In regard to the selection of the books for a Sunday-school library, some rules should be adopted as a guide.

Seven years ago Dr. John S. Hart recommended the following:

1. Take no book that is carelessly written.
2. Take no book that is weak and trashy in substance.
3. Take no book that contains erroneous doctrines.
4. Take no book that recommends, or countenances, what is of doubtful propriety.
5. Take no book that is dull and prosy.
6. Take no book that is above the comprehension of the scholars.
7. Take no book that requires coaxing to induce the scholars to read it.
8. Take no book the interest of which depends, in any considerable degree, on love and matrimony.
9. Take no book that is not distinctly religious.
10. Take no book whose religious teachings are not scriptural.

If the above rules were strictly carried out, in the selection of books for the Sunday-school library, my opinion is that it would not be at all necessary for me to write anything in regard to its management.

There are now about ten thousand different books in the market, from which selections are made for Sunday-schools, and others are continually coming into the market. Notwithstanding the immense issue of Sunday-school juvenile papers and periodicals, still the book-press is running night and day to supply the almost insatiate craving for more books—new books.

It is one of the things that will have its time and season, and will not down at the bidding of any one. It

becomes necessary, therefore, to say a few things in regard to the management of the library.

1. Use every precaution to select only good and wholesome books.

2. Get only a few at a time, and let them be thoroughly read before others are supplied.

3. To find the best method of distributing a library, go to the nearest place where there is a good library, under good management and see how they do, and then adopt their system, with such modifications as you see fit. This practical information will be better than a hundred pages, concerning methods, written in books.

4. With these suggestions, we leave this question to be settled by the best sense of those who have a library to manage.

#### X.—REVIEWS.

VALUE.—A single view of a lesson is not sufficient to fix it lastingly in the memory ; hence, the necessity of a review. No one can tell whether he has real knowledge upon any question until he attempts to give it out again.

It is what we retain after repeated efforts that makes us wise and intelligent. No soldier is a veteran simply because he has fought one battle. The ox fills his great outer stomach with almost everything within his reach ; but it is only in rumination—the ox method of reviewing—that this miscellaneous *filling* becomes bone and muscle, hide and horns of the great beast.

In our study we gather material for our intellectual and moral stimulus from every source accessible to us ; but it is only by review and meditation that it becomes a portion of our mental and moral treasure.

PURPOSE.—The purpose, therefore, of a review is twofold.

1. The direct, which is to preserve knowledge. Truth is fostered in the mind by frequent repetition. It is the only method by which we can successfully test the knowledge of a scholar. "I know, but I can't tell," is a very common way of escaping the charge of ignorance. The fact is, that what a person thoroughly knows he can tell. He may not be able to express himself elegantly, but he will express himself so that it is clearly seen that he *knows*.

2. The indirect purpose, which is to perfect the knowledge which has been gained. It is a rare thing to get a full view of truth on a first examination. The mind needs to call it up again and again; to repeat it line upon line; to meditate upon it—to think it through and through. This is specially true of Scripture questions. A celebrated student of the Bible once said that upon a first reading of a passage of Scripture that it seemed to him that there was not much in it; but when he read it over and over, and over again, and "bent over" it in meditation, and looked at it from every side, it finally became so clear, and beautiful, and gem-like, that he could not help thinking that an angel had been down between times and stitched in some new leaves. "Even a fine painting or a piece of sculpture must be often seen to be fully appreciated. Its novelties dazzle or confuse the mind. As when we enter a strange house, we know not where to look for the several apartments, and the articles of interest and value—even a familiar guide can only point them out to us—we need to return again and again, and observe



them with eyes grown familiar to the place and light; so one rarely returns to an old book or lesson without finding much that is new and valuable which escaped the first study. At every review we approach the lesson from a new point of view. We come with a different aim and feeling, and bring with us the light of some new knowledge.

Besides these two main uses of the review, there are secondary results. These may be summarized in substance as follows:

1. The unity and harmony of a series of lessons is preserved.
2. It helps forward those who are, from any cause, behind in their classes.
3. In making the truth familiar, it becomes more and more attractive.
4. It is the surest test of proficiency in the scholars.

FREQUENCY.—Every lesson should be reviewed briefly at the close of the recitation by the teacher; the entire school should be reviewed by the superintendent. Where a series of lessons are studied in a school having a direct relation to each other, there should be a monthly, quarterly, and, finally, a yearly review.

No good review can be had without the most careful thought and preparation. A lesson will not review itself. A few hints in regard to the preparative for review are here given.

1. Get the material for review, by faithful study, week by week.
2. Decide upon some *plan* for review, and arrange your material accordingly.

3 Make your programme *too short*, or, in other words, do not attempt too much. Take a few leading points and make them clear.

Then will the review fulfill its purpose, and be like a good story, well told, full of interest.

### XI.—SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAMMES.

A Sunday-school is not well furnished until it has a good programme of exercises. The arrangement as to the length of time which such exercise shall occupy is not marked, as that will depend upon special knowledge which can not be anticipated ; such as the length of time devoted to Sunday-school work, the character of the school, and the character of the lessons to be studied.

The following are given as good specimens:

#### PROGRAMME I.

1. Whatever may be the time selected for opening the school, begin on time. "Tardiness is the unpardonable sin in school management."

2. Singing.

3. Prayer by the superintendent.

4. Singing.

5. Reading the Scripture lesson, either alternately, elliptically, in concert, or by the superintendent.

6. Classes go to their places, and the teachers call the class-roll, and take the class contribution.

7. Study of the lesson in the classes. (Time, 35 minutes.)

8. Review of the lesson by the superintendent.

9. Singing.

10. Notices, closing exercises, and benediction.

Time for the school one hour and fifteen minutes.

PROGRAMME II.

1. Perfect silence.

2. Invocation (very brief).

3. Singing.

4. Recitation of the Titles, Topics, and Golden Texts of the current lessons up to the day's lesson by the whole school.

5. Review Catechism (10 minutes); embracing the main facts of the quarter's lessons up to the day's lesson.

6. Class studies (35 minutes).

7. Review of the day's lesson, with practical application.

8. Two minutes catechism on the books of the Bible, or some other general question.

9. Report of secretary.

10. Announcements for the week, always including preaching, weekly prayer-meeting, teacher's meeting, etc.

11. Singing.

12. Books and papers distributed.

13. Silence.

14. Dismission.

The length of the whole session one hour and thirty minutes.

PROGRAMME III.

1. Roll-call of teachers.

2. Recitation by the whole school (Twenty-third Psalm).

3. Invocation.

4. Singing.

5. Reading selected Scripture (alternately).

6. Singing.
  7. Prayer.
  8. Reading the lesson (in concert).
  9. Lesson study—40 minutes.
  10. Singing.
  11. Review—10 minutes.
  12. The Lord's Prayer—repeated by all.
  13. Dismissal—by classes.
  14. Teachers' prayer-meeting at the close—20 minutes.
- The length of the whole session two hours, including the teachers' prayer-meeting.

#### PROGRAMME IV.

1. Singing.
2. Responsive reading :

*Sup't.*—"Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture"—Psalm c. 3.

*Teachers.*—"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."—Psalm ciii. 8.

*School.*—"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."—Isaiah lv. 6.

*Sup't.*—"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Romans v. 8.

*Teachers.*—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Romans viii. 32.

*School*—"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Hebrews vii. 25.

*Sup't.*—"He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews xi. 6.

*Males.*—"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psalm xc. 12.

*Females.*—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."—Proverbs i. 7.

*Males.*—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet."—Psalm cxix. 105.

*Females.*—"And a light unto my path."—Psalm cxix. 105.

*Males.*—"Order my steps in thy word."—Psalm cxix. 133.

*School.*—"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."—Psalm cxix. 2.

*Sup't.*—"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."—Matthew v. 6.

3. Prayer.

4. Reading the lesson.

5. Singing

6. Report of the secretary.

7. Notices, teacher's mark attendance, collection.

8. Study of the lesson.

9. Review.

10. Distribution of papers.

11. Singing.

12. Closing responsive reading.

*Sup't.*—"Here have we no continuing city."—Hebrews xiii. 14.

*Scholars.*—"But we seek one to come."—Hebrews xiii. 14.

*Sup't.*—"Blessed are the pure in heart."—Matthew v. 8.

*Scholars.*—"For they shall see God."—Matthew v. 8.

*Sup't.*—"Blessed are they which do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

### 13. Benediction.

Whole time one hour and forty minutes. Responsive readings at the opening and closing of the school may be made very profitable for a change. Any good superintendent can prepare them.

## XII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

There are many things, of more or less importance, which belong to the management of Sunday-schools, of which it is impossible to treat extensively in such a work as this. There are many things for which it is not possible to frame rules which will apply in all cases.

The principles which we have laid down, and have elaborated to some extent, will guide the intelligent and wise Sunday-school worker in all these questions of a miscellaneous character--such as Sunday-school music; anniversaries; closing schools, either in winter or in summer; treatment of new scholars; starting new schools and mission schools; visiting the scholars; classifying the scholars; the teacher's week-day life, etc., etc.

In this wonderful field of Christian activity—the Sunday-school—no person should engage unless he can say, with the great Apostle, in truth: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." That means no wavering in faith in God and his word—a sub-

lime trust in Him who is, and who "is a Rewarder of them who diligently seek him."

There are some passages of Scripture which may appropriately be called

"TEXTS FOR TEACHERS."

1. *The Teacher's Commission.* John xxi. 15: "Feed my lambs."

2. *The Teacher's Motive.* Matthew xxv. 40: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, *ye have done it unto me.*"

3. *The Teacher's Responsibility.* Hebrews xiii. 17: "For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Romans xiv. 12: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

4. *The Teacher's Strength.* II. Corinthians iii. 5: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Philippians iv. 13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

5. *The Teacher's Preparation.* II. Timothy ii. 15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

6. *The Teacher's Success.* Psalm cxxvi. 6: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

"It is a beautiful thing to model a statue and give it life; but to mold an intelligence, and instill truth therein,

is still more beautiful." Sunday-school teacher, this is your work. May your "sheaves" be many, and your joy be full.

### XIII.—THE RELIGIOUS NATURE OF A CHILD.

It is assumed that there is in every child a religious nature. It is a proposition which will hardly admit of a doubt, either, from any one who has made man and his experiences anything like a careful study. From the savage, in his mud hut, to the most intelligent of kings or philosophers—all along the line of human life—there is a recognition, by man, of some Being to whom worship or supreme reverence and respect is given.

While the great, wise, and loving God and Father of the Christian may not be "in all their thoughts," yet there is something—be it moon, or star, or sun, or wave, or wind—to which he gives reverence and bends his spirit.

A full appreciation of this fact has much to do in inspiring Christians to the grandest efforts in behalf of the proper development and culture of this gift to the universal nature of man.

How to develop this religious nature, so that it shall respond to the highest demands of infinite wisdom, love, and promise, is the serious question to which all parents and Sunday-school workers are invited.

The Bible idea of development is an education based upon the word of God—a knowing of the Holy Scriptures—and the exhibition of the principles learned, in a life whose perfected stature is after the model of the perfect man—Christ Jesus.



First of all, God gives the command to *teach*. This is the first thing to be done with the child that is born.

“And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons and thy sons’ sons.”

Before a child can keep the law of God it must know the law of God. It can not know it unless it is taught. Teaching is, therefore, at the very foundation of all religious development. The law was given as a guide—a leader—to something far beyond the legal and transitory—perfected manhood, through the transforming power of a religious principle. The law was given that the memory might hold within its grasp the knowledge of God, and the mind have something upon which to feed in its hours of reflection and meditation.

In the second place, God commands to *train*. “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.” “Withhold not correction from the child.” “And ye fathers, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The period of training is that period wherein the law is put to use, and the principles which have been taught before are put into practice. The child is not to be left to himself, but is to be guided and led by the hand that rocked his cradle.

How true it is, "A child left to himself brings his mother to shame."

By use the arms and limbs of the child's body become strong; and what is that but the discipline which God has ordained for the body's development?

By the use of the word of God in soberness, and righteousness, and godliness—by prayer, by giving, by meditation, by thanksgiving, by labor—the soul is developed, the religious nature grows as by the ordinance of God; the conscience becomes sensitive to the touch of the Divine Spirit, and responds to the word spoken from heaven, as the waves of the ocean give heed to the influences which are above them.

But there is still another step in this development. The best of teaching and training will result only in the production of the intelligent and vigorous mind, and the lion-like heart. There is needed yet the graces—the adornments for this religious nature—the garments of praise, the gentleness and docility of a nature not defeated, but subdued by a power which, while it brings every thought into captivity with it, still fills the heart with a power that can conquer everything, but that by which it was conquered—can conquer easily.

God commands growth in grace—culture. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace."

It needs only to be suggested to be admitted that home has very much, if not the most, to do in the development of the religious nature of a child. Home has the first opportunity. The first visions of any future possible to it are from the home. To the child

The hand that rocks its cradle  
Is the hand that moves the world.

The parental power, for the time being, is mightier than the word of God, on the arm of angel or devil.

The impressions made in the family will last forever. Hence the necessity of forming right habits at the beginning, such as private devotions—a person will be none the less a monument of God's grace, if he has been trained to pray from his mother's knee—in love for family devotions; in love for the services of the Church of God.

The Sunday-school teacher is an important factor in the solution of this question. He has more than the power of father or mother sometimes. His sense of responsibility, therefore, should be as acute as that of the parent. He is permitted to lead into wider fields, than can be traversed in the circle of home, the soul whose possibilities are eternal.

The Church has its duty in the premises. It must look upon those who come into its membership in childhood as children. Its services ought to be arranged with reference to their wants.

In no grander work can this divine trinity—the family, the school, the church—co-operate than in giving ideas to childhood, and in culturing them to their perfect fruit.

“There is nothing so admirable in all the world as the

power of an idea." To possess a great, good idea is to have a mission, a knowledge of duty, a clear path, an inspiration, and finally an eternal triumph.

The purpose of all that we have written in this book has been to outline the methods by which this teaching, training, and culture of the religious nature can be carried on in the family, Sunday-school, or Church. Happy will be our own hearts, happy will be the world, happy will be the angels, happy will be all heaven, if our hearts shall be so perfect, and our labor so faultless, that God can say of us, as he did of Abraham: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord."

## THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

THERE is truth in the following statement from the pen of an accomplished and careful American thinker and writer:

“There is much that is excellent in the literature prepared for American children: there is much of parental culture and Sunday-school instruction; and the good people of the country are doing a great deal to train up a generation of virtuous men and women.”

Unquestionably, this is true; and yet it is only a part of the whole truth on the subject of the religious education of children. The wisdom of this world has been severely taxed to provide the means, and point the way, to the perfect stature of manhood; but it has failed, because it has failed to observe one of the necessary conditions to such a development. That condition is the recognition and use of the principles and art of the divine wisdom in the nurture and discipline of children. In this chapter we shall have more anxiety to find out the “right way of the Lord” than to learn even the best lessons of human philosophy. Unless we mistake, we shall examine every passage in the Bible which bears upon the question—at least, every class of passages.

We propose the following order of investigation:

- I. The parental or family element.
- II. The Church school.
- III. The divine method.

## I. THE PARENTAL OR FAMILY.

When we speak of the "religious education of children," we have reference to an education that is based upon the teaching of the Bible; an education that will include the "knowing of the Holy Scriptures," as the result of careful study; also, the exhibition of the principles learned, in a life whose perfected stature is after the model of the perfect man, Christ Jesus.

Very much of what is called "religious education" finds its summit when it has reached the element of morality; hence it is that so frequently men who have exhibited the grace of correct morality are counted among those who have gained the very highest exaltation to which the Bible calls them. But this can not be true, if the words of the Apostle in Titus ii. 12, have any definite meaning: "We should live soberly, righteously, and *godly* in this present world."

By a comparison of the "best man of the world" with the "best member of the Church," we find a condition of things, morally and spiritually, like this:

(a) The best man of the world "denies ungodliness and worldly lusts;" so does the best man in the Church.

(b) The best man of the world lives "soberly and righteously;" so does the best member of the Church.

And here the comparison ends; for one step more and the worldling becomes a Christian. Morality includes nothing more than a denial of "ungodliness and worldly lusts," and a living "soberly and righteously" in this present world. And all this could be done without scarcely a thought of what God requires in the heart. Men demand this much in their noblest characters; but

God requires more than this. In the religious education of which we are writing, the element of "godliness" must appear as the crowning factor in God's law of growth. It is the gem of a perfect religious education. Hence, the Christian "adds godliness" to all else that he may possess, and his character can never be complete without it.

The parental or family element or influence in the religious education of children is of primary importance. It can not be superseded or supplanted by any other agency. The relation of parents and children is, indeed, the golden theme of the Bible. In the Old and New Testaments, the word "children" is found not less than five hundred and twenty-eight times. They may be classified as follows:

*First Group*—"Children," where the word is used in its generic sense.

*Second Group*—"Children of God," where the word is used to represent an unusually near relationship to God.

*Third Group*—"Children of men," an expression used in contrast with the expression, "Children of God."

*Fourth Group*—"Little Children," referring to either spiritual or physical stature, according to the connection in which the expression is found.

These four classes, or groups, include all the uses of the word in the Bible.

The family is God's primal institution for the early religious education of the children. Whatever can be said in favor of the Church-school, or the agency of the pulpit—and much can be said in favor of both—the fact

above stated must never be lost sight of by Christian parents. Nowhere can the beautiful graces of the divine life be made to appear to such advantage as in the home where, from wise teachers, children have received that instruction which is wise, and been nurtured in the "unstained childhood of the soul."

The language of the Bible is very direct and decisive to parents in regard to their duty to their children. The feeling of the true parent is expressed in the beautiful words of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, when God had revealed unto him the fact that his wife should bear to him a son: "O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born!" In the eighty-eighth Psalm, the following language is found: "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he *commanded* our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, and keep his commandments, and might not be as their fathers a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their hearts aright, and whose spirit was not *steadfast* with God." This language is very explicit in its directions to the Jewish family. The Jew was always taught that children, instead of being an incumbrance, were a "heritage of the Lord;" and they were to be trained in the faith that "children should praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his



glory above the earth and heaven." Again, Isaiah xxxviii. 19: "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth."

The Apostle Paul, in II. Corinthians xii. 14, in a suggestive sentence, expressive of the relation of parents and children, uses this language: "For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." This is as true of spiritual or religious things as of temporal. Again, in Ephesians vi. 4: "And, ye fathers, stir not up the anger of your children; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Noyes's Translation.) Christian fathers were to furnish their children with a religious education, under the solemn sanction and commandment of the Lord. To the same effect is the teaching of Colossians iii. 21: "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged."

In Deuteronomy vi. 6-8, Moses, in speaking to the nation as if it were a single person, says: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

To secure the perpetual remembrance of God's ways, judgments, and commandments, it was required that parents should "tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation."—Joel i. 3.

To Israel God said, Deuteronomy xxxii. 46, 47: "Set

your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; *because it is your life.*"

These passages, from the Old and New Testaments, are clear and distinct in their utterances. They teach one lesson. Parents can not escape the plain and direct commandment of God which bears upon the duty of training their children in the "discipline and instruction of the Lord;" in other words, to furnish them with a religious education.

There is no time like childhood for this work. The "evil days" have not yet come, when children can say: "We have no pleasure in knowing and serving God." If men and women are expected to be Christians of the "noble sort," their education for that sublime position must begin in the days of childhood and youth. "Their submission to the law of Christ, both in faith and conduct, should be so gently instilled as to become like an unconscious or instinctive direction of the whole character. This would be Christian nurture, the true religious education."

We admit the difficulty of this great undertaking; yet it is a duty none the less because it is difficult, and to recognize it is, at least, one step toward its accomplishment.

In these days we hear a great deal said, from platform and fireside, about leaving the minds of children unbiased. The teaching is: "Leave the children untaught upon all religious subjects, until they have arrived at the years of discretion—whenever that is—so that they may

choose for themselves, and decide upon all disputed questions without prejudice." But this is the very thing that God commands us *not* to do. *There will be a bias given to a child's life.* God knows it, and so do we. Hence, the fearful power of choice is not given to the mere child in years or knowledge; but to him whose heart has been trained and mind taught that there is a "highway of holiness," and a "way that leadeth unto death." Instruction is for the child; training is demanded; a God-ward culture is required. If children are not biased in favor of a godly life, and their hearts pointed "to a region of infinite purity and love, where all that is good and happy is parted off by itself, and hangs above us like a firmament of grandeur and beauty," does it follow, therefore, that they go into manhood or womanhood without bias? Certainly not. Rather is it true that every Satanic influence has sweep, with nothing to hinder its fearful power, until the day when the "awful power" of choice is given, when, the whole course of life having been biased by evil, it is nothing less than a marvel if the choice is not downward "to a region where sin in its hideous shape sinks away to its own level, and seeks the hiding-places of a starless night." It sounds very like human wisdom—this talk about an unbiased choice. But the eternal mandate of divine wisdom thunders, No! It is an impossible thing. Such language sounds like liberality; but it is the expression of miserable ignorance or infernal indifference; nay, worse even than that, it is the absolute defiance of the teaching of common experience and the plain reasoning of the word of God. Christian parents, under the solemnities of that

complete and voluntary transfer of all they have and are to Christ, *must* "bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

Very likely we may be asked: "Would not this make them believers in Christ by an authority which they can hardly resist, and from which they can afterward hardly escape? Does it not settle the question for them before they are in a position to choose for themselves, that Jesus is a divine teacher, and his doctrines a divine command?" In the language of one who has evidently given this question due consideration, we reply: "Unquestionably it does, and unquestionably it is what we are bound to do. If there are any who care so little about religion as to wish their children to be left so free that they are as likely to be infidels as believers, heathens as Christians, their liberality goes so far beyond my own that there can be no sympathy between us. If they do not concede that religion of some sort or other is a necessity, and that the purest and best religion of which we know any thing is the Christian, and the purest morality that which Christ taught, there is no common ground for us to stand upon. But if this is admitted—if we must have some religion, some object of worship, some divinely sanctioned law, and if the Christian religion and the Christian law are the best of which we know—it follows, surely, that we are bound, by the love which we bear to our children, and by our responsibility for them to God, to spare no pains in bringing them to that which is conceded to be the noblest and the best. Unquestionably, they would be brought by such a course to be Christians; and that is precisely the result we would secure. Let the divine principles of the gos-

pel be "once thoroughly instilled into the youthful character, let the divine beauty of the life of Jesus be once revealed to the youthful heart, let the divine truths which Jesus taught once take possession of the youthful mind, and skepticism, although it may in after years disturb the thoughts, will never be able to enter the citadel of the soul, or to disturb its unchanging faith. Once having lived upon the heavenly food, we must be indeed prodigals to desire the husks that the swine do eat. And if through the waywardness of sin we become prodigals, the memory of our early home remains, until we say in our heart, 'We will arise and go to our father' "

This early instruction can not be eradicated. The character has been formed by it; and, by the grace of God, the "life in Christ" has been made incarnate in the soul. With such a duty resting upon them, and in view of the fearful responsibility, well may parents exclaim: "Who is sufficient for such things?" We can only reply, in the language of the Apostle: "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The path of duty and responsibility, though rugged, must be climbed; and, if parents travel it with unflinching confidence in God, their feet will stand upon "those sun-smit summits where the tempters never come—above all cares and troubles, above even the clouds and the thunders, where they catch the pure gleams of the land of peace and have the earnest of its blissful rest."

II. We are now ready to consider the CHURCH-SCHOOL, in its relation to this subject. This institution comes next after the family in the list of agencies provided by divine wisdom for the purposes of religious discipline

and instruction. The root-idea is suggested in the following passages from the Bible: Deuteronomy iv. 10: "Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children." Again, Deuteronomy xxxi. 12, 13: "Gather the people together, men, women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

The great gathering of the people together, mentioned in the above passages, was once in seven years—"At the end of every seven years." It was not so much, primarily, for the information and instruction of the people as it was a typical or symbolical transaction, intended, as so many others were, to impress on the people the conditions on which they held possession of their privileges and blessings.

But one thing is worthy of notice; it was to be done in the presence of the whole congregation. Besides this general reading of the law "at the end of every seven years," there were the regular schools, which were open on every Sabbath day.

The synagogue service consisted (1) of public prayers; (2) the reading of the Scriptures; (3) and finally, the expounding of the Scriptures and preaching from them. At these services, men, women, and children were present.

Besides the regular synagogue service, there were other times, also, when children could come and receive instruction from the Rabbis, one or more of whom were constantly in the synagogue to give the instruction needed. The provision for the religious instruction of the Jewish children was most complete.

In the schools taught in the synagogues, the youth received instructions in the divine law. In the temple, as well as in the synagogues, assemblies of learned men were held; in one of which the parents of Jesus found him sitting in the midst of doctors, both "hearing them and asking them questions, and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and his answers." If the Jewish economy was a "prophecy and type of the Christian dispensation" (and much of it is so, without doubt), and if "these things were written for our instruction," it will not at all surprise us if we find much of the method and forms of these services illustrated in the example of Christ Jesus and his Apostles. The history of the primitive Church has much of a direct or incidental character bearing upon its practice in this particular.

From Luke iv. 16-22, we learn something of the method of our Savior. He acted as reader of the Scriptures, and also as teacher or preacher in the synagogue at Nazareth. Paul also, as we learn from Acts xiii. 14-16, went into the synagogue at Antioch, in Pisidia, and taught the audience which gathered there out of the Scriptures. One of the gifts to the early Church were "teachers." From the voluminous history of Mosheim there are a few paragraphs which we may extract with profit. He says:

"In these assemblies, that is, the Lord's-day meetings of Chris-

tians, the Holy Scriptures were publicly read, and for that purpose were divided into certain portions or lessons. This part of divine service was followed by a brief exhortation to the people, in which eloquence and art gave place to the matured and fervent expression of zeal and charity. The prayers, which formed a considerable part of the public worship, were introduced at the conclusion of these discourses, and were repeated by the people after the bishop or presbyter who presided in the service. When the Church began to flourish and its members increase, it was thought prudent and necessary to divide Christians into two orders, distinguished by the names of believers and catechumens. The former were those who had been solemnly admitted into the Church by baptism, and, in consequence thereof, were instructed in all the mysteries of religion, had access to all the parts of divine worship, and were authorized to vote in the ecclesiastical assemblies. The latter were such as had not yet been dedicated to God and Christ by baptism, and were, therefore, neither admitted to the public prayers, nor to the holy communion, nor to the ecclesiastical assemblies. Baptism was administered to none but such as had been previously instructed in the principal points of Christianity, and had also given satisfactory proofs of pious dispositions and upright intentions.

“The methods of instructing the catechumens differed according to their various capacities. To those in whom the natural force of reason was small, only the fundamental principles and truths, which are, as it were, the basis of Christianity, were taught. Those, on the contrary, whom their instructors judged capable of comprehending, in some measure, the whole system of divine truth, were furnished with superior degrees of knowledge, and nothing was concealed from them which could have any tendency to render them firm in their profession, and to assist them in arriving at Christian perfection. The care of instructing such was committed to persons who were distinguished for their gravity and wisdom, and also by their learning and judgment. Hence, the ancient doctors generally divide their flock into two classes: the one comprehending such as were



solidly and thoroughly instructed; the other, those who were acquainted with little more than the first principles of religion.

“The Christians took all possible care to accustom their children to the study of the Scriptures, and to instruct them in the doctrines of their holy religion; and schools were everywhere erected for this purpose, even from the very commencement of the Christian Church.”

Thus we see that abundant and generous provision was made, not only among the Jews, but also by the early Church, for the religious education of the people, children and all; and if we would reproduce the primitive Church in its power and fervor, we must reproduce the Church-school, an agency which more than any other public method filled the early Christians with unquenchable enthusiasm, fervent piety, and unyielding faith in Christ. It was never thought, then, to be an unprofitable investment, either of time or means, to provide for the public training of children to a degree which could not be reached by even the best parental or family instruction. The progress of the child of Christian parents was from the fireside teaching of the conscientious parent to the Church-school, and finally into the Church, the grand university of God from which no diploma of graduation was ever given until the verge of this earthly life was reached, and the candidate prepared to receive, on the basis of a “well-ordered life and godly conduct,” the fadeless honors of a triumphant graduation into the blessed fellowship and service of heaven. So should it be now; so are we seeking to have it in our attempts to make the modern Sunday-school a blessed and powerful agency in the study and teaching of the word of God to those who may have no other means of learning the

divine will; those of indifferent or wicked parents; those who are poor and needy, and especially the children of Christian parents, a class that ever ought to be, by the thoroughness and carefulness of parental and Church-school instruction, known as the "children of the Church."

The Church-school of to-day has before it splendid opportunities and a kingly future. It is able to do a parent's work for orphans, and for those whose homes are silent on religious matters.

It can and will bring the gospel to great multitudes who could not, at the first, be persuaded to attend the public preaching of the word. "It proposes to inaugurate the Church with all its appliances, where hitherto unknown, and especially re-establish the religious influence of home."

No man this side of the great judgment day can possibly measure its influence, if such indeed be its work. And no Church can be sinless, and not do its utmost to make the Church-school a powerful agency in the religious education of the children within its reach. A Church is guilty of a gross neglect of its duty if it allows any child to grow up in irreligion, whom it has the means of reaching and reclaiming. And what is true here of the Church is true of its members individually.

But this responsibility of the Church to look after a child by no means relieves the parents from their responsibility in regard to the same child. If the child is lost and God holds the Church guilty for the loss, it does not follow that he will hold the parent guiltless. It is a case of double responsibility for the same object. The object—

the salvation of the child—is so important that God puts it under double guard. It is like taking two indorsers to a note; the failure of one indorser does not exonerate the other; the holder has his remedy equally against both, and thus the fulfillment of the obligation is better secured.

Everything about us and within us indicates that this life is preliminary and preparatory. It is a “segment and not a circle, and all its consenting voices make up one grand prophecy of something to be hereafter.” Childhood, youth, manhood, and age, are only successive waves in the river of years, that rolls onward its mighty waters, till they stir the vast ocean waves, whose throbs beat on forever. The family, the Church-school, and the Church, embrace the forces which God in his wisdom has provided, by which the humblest may reach the summit of the mount of God, and with the noblest enjoy him forever.

### III. THE DIVINE METHOD.

The discussion on this branch must be brief. We have already shown the importance of early religious education, and the necessity of its being carefully attended to by parents and by the Church. It remains for us to notice the divine method in the prosecution of this work. It appears to us, that nothing can be truer—and it has been our conviction for years—than that the religious character formed by early education is stronger and better than that which becomes good only by conversion. Considered as an education for practical life, it is far better and more worthy of reliance. The love of God should be a natural affection, and obedience to the law of Christ, the common law of the household. To use a figure drawn from land

transactions, the children ought to be pre-empted for God, from the beginning of their life.

With the mass of mankind, as at present we find them, conversion—that is, a turning from sin to holiness, and from Satan unto God—is absolutely required, in order to present or future happiness. But the entire theory and practice of conversion points to the stupendous fact that ‘all have sinned,’ all have come short of the glory of God. It is easy to say that this condition of things ought not to be so; but how to prevent it *now*, or how to have hindered it at first, nothing but infinite and supreme intelligence can answer. The divine method, which demands the early training and nurture of children into a true faith and obedience to God, is, without doubt, the only true method. Religious faith must be made of the earliest instincts of children—the law of their moral and intellectual life.

The mother ought to be “a great teacher” sent from God; for she, above all others, holds the eternal destiny of her child in her hand

The family, like a fully rounded orb of light, should be the brilliant sphere from which the purest and serenest light for the earthly pathway, and to the land of immortality, should radiate. The parental relation should be recognized as a religious guardianship, and all the teaching, by father or mother, should impress the lesson of reverence toward God. Such a family would be to its children a fountain of life—a departure from the snares of death. Such a mother would be “like the merchant’s ships, she brings her food from afar.”

When such a method is pursued in the family, then

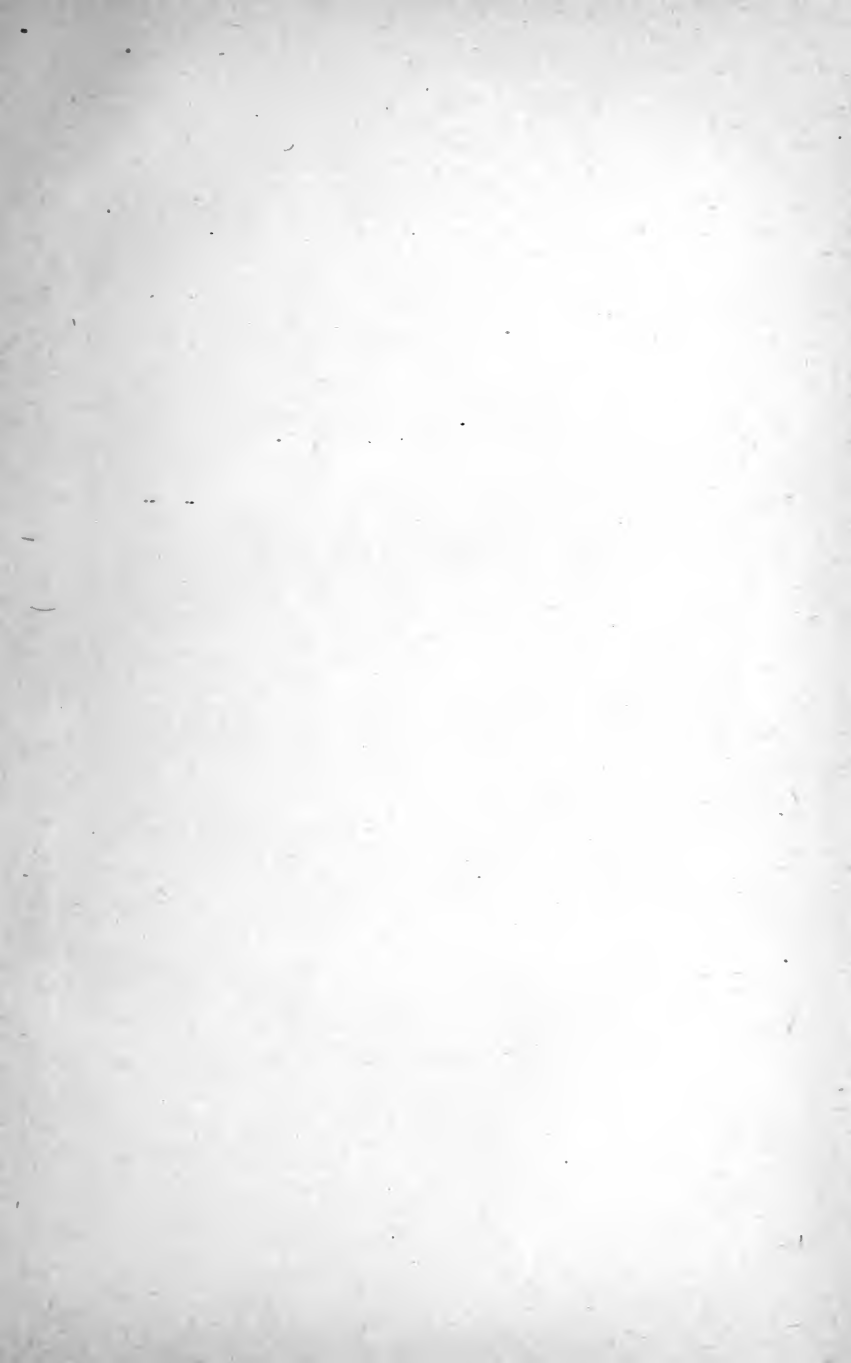
will the cause of Christ cease to languish, and Zion be filled with the fragrance of her bursting roses. Sincerity would take the place of insincerity, the mere formality of religion cease, and the spiritual, which is its practical, life appear. Our young men would become our religious men, and our daughters would grow, in their youth and beauty, into the polished columns of the temple of God.





















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